Aspiring
Towards
“Elite”
Your Presenter...

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US Soccer National Instructional Staff
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US Youth Soccer Coaching Committee Chair
US Youth Soccer National League Committee

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Fundamental Questions

In The Youth Soccer World...
Are You Elite Because You Win?
Do You Win Because You Are Elite?

In The Youth Soccer World...
Should The Club Serve The Player?
Should The Player Serve The Club?
Presentation Goals

1. Define “Elite” Level.
2. Define the Key Elements of a club aspiring to become or remain *Elite*. 
Elite: Results Based?

Youth National Teams

US Soccer Development Academy

US Youth Soccer National Championship Series
US Youth Soccer National and Regional Leagues
Elite Clubs National League
National Premier Leagues

************

State Leagues
Local Leagues
Elite: Processed Based?

Player Mentality

Quality of Coaching

Club Philosophy

Planning for Development
Part I
Player Mentality
Player Mentality

Primary goal of competitive youth soccer is to prepare players to compete at the “next” level...

Senior National Team
Professional
Amateur
College
Youth National Teams
Representative Teams
Older Age Divisions
Player Mentality

The “Aspiring” Player

Changed Persona
Emotionally Different
Self-Motivated
Committed to Playing and Training

Prodigies / Age Factor
Early Developers

- Rory McIlroy
  U-9/10 World Champion

- Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
  First composition by age 5

- Fabiano Luigi Caruana
  Youngest Grandmaster at age 14

- Willie Mosconi
  Professional Billiards at age 6

- Joe Bonamassa
  Opened for BB King at age 11

- Michelle Wie
  US Amateur Championships at age 10

- Kim Ung-Yong:
  Attended University at age 4, Ph.D at age 15; world's highest IQ
Later Arrivals

Hakeem Olajuwon
Started basketball at age 15

Jay Demerit
Professional rookie at age 25

Maurice Adu
1st national team call-up at age 21

Zack Johnson
One D-I scholarship offer

Kurt Warner
NFL rookie at age 28

Shannon Boxx
National Team debut at age 26

Randy Johnson: MLB Rookie at age 25
Player Mentality

Qualities of Top Players?

Bocanegra / Sauerbrunn / Cherundolo

Scholes / Boxx / Pirlo

Ronaldo / Marta / Messi
Player Mentality

All Technically Capable
All Tactically Aware
Athletically / Emotionally Capable
Driven / Passionate
Some Special Qualities

The Challenge For Your Club
Player-Centered Development?
Vision Of The End Product?
Applied Goldilocks

The coaching and playing environment that challenges emotionally committed players to constantly operate on the boundary of their comfort zone best serves to promote learning and long-term development.

An elevated level of anxiety is important for learning. The prospect of playing good opposition raises the anxiety necessary for optimal performance and improvement.
Part I Summary

No Development Without Peers!
Balanced competition with, and against like-skilled and like-motivated players improves learning and development.

Is Your Club...
Providing For, or Impeding Top Talent Development?
Part II
Quality of Coaching
Qualities of Top Coaches

Education and Development

Athlete-Centered * Best Practices * Latest Methods * Applied Science
## Coaching Skills by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching Style</th>
<th>Skill Markers</th>
<th>Typical Age Range</th>
<th>Characteristics of Soccer Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Modeler</strong></td>
<td>Little or no experience with a soccer ball.</td>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Coach is typically a parent or sibling who models skills and tricks; engages in one-on-one activities; and engages players in free play games.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Facilitator</strong></td>
<td>Have some elementary skills and ideas. Poor spatial awareness.</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>Coach creates small-sided soccer games and related skill activities that help introduce players to organized soccer without engaging in formal instruction.</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<td>The Concept Builder (E License)</td>
<td>Have developed a reasonable comfort level with the ball and can start to think ahead. Spatial awareness allows for movement away from the ball. Physical and emotional qualities and passing range comfortably provide for play between two lines; three, as experience and passing range evolve.</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>Coach begins to systematically plan for player development. Coach begins formal skill instruction. Coach creates small-sided and expanded small-sided games and activities that help develop awareness of attacking, defending and transition moments. The main tactical focus is building understanding of the principles of play. Specific goals are to develop ideas on spacing, support, and rhythm; recovering the ball; and reacting to changes in possession.</td>
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# Coaching Skills by Age

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</table>
| The Problem Solver (D-C-B Licenses) | Developing skill levels provide for formal positional play.  
Physical and emotional qualities and passing range comfortably provide for play between three lines. | 10-18 | Coach isolates specific breakdowns and observed areas for improvement, based on an “ideal” vision (National Style) and a system(s) of play.  
Coach organizes long- and short-term training goals to improve a) the specific actions of individual players and small groups; b) the relationship between adjacent lines; and c) the style and tactical understanding of the team.  
Coach develops technical training based on individual player needs.  
Coach implements formal periodization program for player development. |
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<tr>
<td>The Strategist (A License)</td>
<td>Playing experience and skill level provide for global awareness and strategic thinking.</td>
<td>15+</td>
<td>Coach develops training that builds a style of play based on a system(s) of play.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coach develops training sessions that plan for system vs system (and player vs player) match-ups.</td>
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The Strategist (A License) playing experience and skill level provide for global awareness and strategic thinking.

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Coach develops training sessions that plan for system vs system (and player vs player) match-ups.
# Measuring Sideline Personality

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
<th>Under Stress... Process or Outcome Centered?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume of Information</strong></td>
<td>Selective</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global vs Local Coaching</strong></td>
<td>Mostly Global</td>
<td>Mostly Local</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Response to Mistakes</strong></td>
<td>Mostly Positive</td>
<td>Mostly Negative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coach or Cheerleader</strong></td>
<td>Mostly Informative</td>
<td>Mostly Praising</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Body Language</strong></td>
<td>Well Controlled</td>
<td>Highly Emotional</td>
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<td><strong>Referee Respect</strong></td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Abusive</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Coaching Personality Score</strong></td>
<td>/ 60</td>
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Part II Summary

Coaches Make Players Make Teams

Are Your Coaches...

Providing For, or Impeding Top Talent Development?
Part III
Club Philosophy
Evolving a Club Style

**Elements of Constructive Soccer**

- Spacing and Role Definitions
- Lateral Ball Circulation
- The Goalkeeper as an Attacker
- Changes in Rhythm
- Backs and Midfielders in Attack
- Vision and Combination Play
- Clearing vs Building
- Defensive Strategies
- Basic Offside Tactics
Constructive Soccer: U-8’s
# Evolving a Club Style

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<th>Element</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lateral Ball Circulation</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<td>Changes in Rhythm</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Backs and Midfielders in Attack</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision and Combination Play</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearing vs Building</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defensive Strategies</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic Offside Tactics</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Management</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substitution Management</td>
<td>10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Developmental Score</td>
<td>/ 110</td>
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</table>
Constructive Soccer: U-11’s
### Attacking
- Building/Attacking Out of the Back Half
- Building/Attacking vs a High Restraining Line
- Building/Attacking in the Front Half
- Offside Tactics

### Transition to Defense
- Pressing vs Dropping

### Defending
- Defending in the Front Half
- Defending from behind a Line of Confrontation
- Bunkering
- Offside Tactics

### Transition to Attack
- Counter-Attacking vs Building Up

### Universal Playing Themes
- Mobility (within/between lines) vs Balance (line/team)
- Rhythm of Play
- Spacing
- Speed Of Play
Constructive Soccer: U-15’s
Part III Summary

Elite Means Constructive Means Risk

Are Your Coaches...

Providing For, or Impeding Top Talent Development?
Part IV
Planning For Development
Long Term Athlete Development

Istvan Balyi
**An Outline of LTAD**

The first 4 stages, with their respective approximate age ranges, are generally appropriate for all late-specialization sports. In the Training to Compete and Training to Win stages, age ranges vary from sport to sport.

**The 10 key factors influencing LTAD**

1. The 10-Year Rule
2. The FUNdamentals
3. Specialization
4. Developmental Age
5. Trainability
6. Physical, Mental, Cognitive, and Emotional Development
7. Periodization
8. Calendar Planning for Competition
9. System Alignment and Integration
10. Continuous Improvement

Figure 1 illustrates the stages of LTAD.
Competition and Recovery

100+ Games per year...

☐ Too many?
☐ About right?
☐ Too few?

Average Break?
Competition and Recovery

Competing in too many games, or in too many meaningless games, dulls the thrill of anticipation and reduces the gains in emotional intelligence associated with preparing to compete against talented opposition.
Development Academy: Why?

- Impact on NT Development
- Style of Coaching
- Quality of Games
- Style of Play
- Style of Player

- Purposeful Periodization
  - Training to Games Ratio
  - Volume & Schedule of Games
  - Purposeful Fitness Training
  - Rest and Recovery Schedules
Periodization

Modality of Training
Frequency of Training
Volume of Training
Intensity of Training
Competition Schedule
Recovery Programs
Short-Term (annual) Training
Long-Term (multi-year) Training
Integrated National League & National Championship Series

- National Championship Series “8” Teams
  - Top Teams Eligible for National League Slots
  - Winners (4)
    - Regional Championship
      - Best Placed Teams
      - Wild-Cards for Best Non-State Champions
  - Winners (55)
    - State Championship
      - Best Placed Teams
      - Wild-Cards for Best Non-Regional Champions

- National League
  - Top 8 Premier Level Teams
    - Regional Leagues
      - Premier & 1st Division
      - Best Placed Teams
      - Top 32 Teams

- Winners/Best Placed
  - National League
    - 32 Teams
    - Four Wild-Cards for Best Non-Regional Champions
## Periodization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<th>Saturday</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Rest</td>
<td>Training Underload</td>
<td>Training Overload</td>
<td>Training Underload</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>GAME</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Training Underload</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>GAME</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>GAME</td>
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### Two Week Division I College Schedule

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<tr>
<td>GAME</td>
<td>Rest</td>
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<td>Training Overload</td>
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<td>GR. GAME-1</td>
<td>GR. GAME-2</td>
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<td>SEMI-FINAL and FINAL</td>
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<td>Rest</td>
<td>Training Overload</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>GR. GAME-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Standard Youth Schedule (w/ Tournament)

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[US Youth Soccer Workshop at the NSCAA Convention](http://usyouthsoccer.org)
### Annual Periodization

#### U 17 National Team

#### Yearly Plan 2004 - 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTHS</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SEPTEMBER</th>
<th>OCTOBER</th>
<th>NOVEMBER</th>
<th>DECEMBER</th>
<th>JANUARY</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
<th>MARCH</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Periodization

- **Microcycle**: 1 to 2 weeks
- **Mesocycle**: 2 to 4 weeks
- **Cycle Phase**: 4 to 6 weeks
- **Annual Phase**: 6 to 8 weeks

#### Strength
- **Acclimation**: Testing
- **Hypertrophy**: Testing
- **Strength**: Programming
- **Power**: Programming
- **Plyometric**: Programming
- **Maintenance**: Dwindled/Unload

#### Movement
- **Active/Best**: A
- **Acceleration**: Programming
- **Multi**: Programming
- **Max Velocity**: Programming

#### E.S.D.
- ** ACTIVE (1:1)**
- **A1 (1:2 / 1:3)**
- **A1 (1:4)**
- **ANA AP (1:5)**
- **ANA AC (1:6)**

#### Recovery
- **Stretching & Con. Baths, etc.**

#### Nutrition
- **Meal Plans & Comp. Guidelines**

#### Workload

**Volume**

**Intensity**

---

**Note**: The image contains a detailed plan for annual periodization, including phases of training such as acclimation, hypertrophy, strength, and power, along with specific programming and testing periods. The workload is represented graphically.
# Soccer Fitness Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintaining Quick Recovery Between Actions</th>
<th>Quicker Recovery Between Actions</th>
<th>Act More Explosively</th>
<th>Maintain Explosive Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X.....X......X..X</td>
<td>X.......X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X..X..X..X..X..X..X..X..X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recovery Capacity</th>
<th>Power to Recover</th>
<th>Explosive Power</th>
<th>Explosive Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extensive Endurance Training</td>
<td>Extensive Interval Training</td>
<td>Power to Accelerate</td>
<td>Repeated Short Sprinting Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11v11/10v10/9v9/8v8</td>
<td>4v4 / 3v3</td>
<td>15m to 40m 1 min rest</td>
<td>10m to 15m 10 sec rest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Endurance Training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Starting Speed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7v7/6v6/5v5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5m to 10m 30 sec rest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supercompensation (Recovery)</td>
<td>Supercompensation (Recovery)</td>
<td>Supercompensation (Recovery)</td>
<td>Supercompensation (Recovery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 hours</td>
<td>72 hours</td>
<td>48 hours</td>
<td>72 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Heart Rates

Controlling Weekly Work Load (Volume and Intensity)

Weekly Load = ~1000-1500 pts
Match Exertion = 350 pts / game

Practice Exertion = 300 - 800 pts (Role of Fitness Coach)

Jere Longman New York Times (11/18-11)

“The naked eye isn’t always telling the truth.”
Geno Auriemma

“It can be dangerous, dictating an entire practice based on a computer.”
Pierre Barrieu
Heart Rates

Controlling Weekly Work Load  (Volume and Intensity)

Individualized Prescriptions
- Starters vs Reserves
- Under-working vs Over-exerting
- Out of Shape vs Physical Exhaustion
- Physical Burnout (recovery patterns)
- Rest Rx

“You can go long or hard, but you can’t go long and hard every day.”  Chris West
U-Conn Strength and Conditioning Coach

Latest Advances
GPS Scrimmage Vests  (Lobanovsky: distance covered and speed)
“Edible” Thermometers (core temperature)

Jere Longman New York Times (11/18-11)
Non Starters: Post Game Training
## Long-Term Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>General Skill Progression</th>
<th>Recurring Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U-6</td>
<td>Dribbling and Shooting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-8</td>
<td>Passing and Receiving on the Ground</td>
<td>U-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-10</td>
<td>Heading and Receiving out of the Air</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-12</td>
<td>Long Passing and Individual Defending</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8 + U-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-14+</td>
<td>Positional Techniques</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8 + U-10 + U-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Main Theme</th>
<th>Recurring Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U-6</td>
<td>Me and My Ball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-8</td>
<td>Sharing the Ball</td>
<td>U-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-10</td>
<td>Playing Around the Ball</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-12</td>
<td>Playing Away From the Ball</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8 + U-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U-14+</td>
<td>Team Development</td>
<td>U-6 + U-8 + U-10 + U-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Seasonal Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>U-6</th>
<th>U-8</th>
<th>U-10</th>
<th>U-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Ind. Att.</td>
<td>Gr. Def.</td>
<td>Ind. Def.</td>
<td>Gr/Tm. Def.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skill Planning: Kicking Skills

There are six surfaces of the foot used for kicking and dribbling the soccer ball…

inside / outside / toe / heel / laces / sole.
Skill Planning: Kicking Skills

There are **Eleven Applications** of kicking techniques.

- Toe pokes
- Short straight passes
- Short flicks
- Bending balls (high and low)
- Driven balls (straight)
- Cut backs
- Chipped balls
- Flighted balls
- Lifted balls
- Full volleys (front, side, overhead, over-shoulder)
- Half-volleys (front and side)
Skill Planning: Kicking Skills

The **Trajectory of the Ball** adds to the complexity of expanding technical range.

The ball can be contacted when it is...

- Stationary
- Rolling, bouncing or flying away from the kicker
- Rolling, bouncing or flying towards the kicker
- Running, bouncing or flying across the kicker
- Flying above or behind the kicker
Skill Planning: Kicking Skills

Finally, the ball can be contacted in different ways to make it move with a Desired Spin and in a Desired Direction.

The ball can be contacted...

- Through the center
- Through the bottom half
- Through the top half
- High or low on either side
Skill Planning: Kicking Skills

Soccer “skill” is the ability to use technique to solve a tactical problem. Because the game situation is always changing, there is no “correct” way to execute any technique in soccer.

...There are, of course, correct mechanical solutions to every kicking action!
Competition: Winning & Losing

- Value of Good Competition
- Why Losing is Important
- Opponent, not Enemy
- Valuing The Opponent
- Respecting The Game
- Respecting The Officials
- Parent Education
Part IV Summary

Elite Clubs Plan For Learning

Is Your Club...

Providing For, or Impeding Top Talent Development?
In Closing

Is Your Club Player Centered?
Is Your Club Process Oriented?

Is Your Club Elite Because You Win?
Does Your Club Win Because You Are Elite?
Does Your Club Have The Tools To Become Elite?
Thank You!

Questions? Comments? Criticisms? Witticisms?