Sustainability of US Youth Soccer's National Youth Coaching License

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SHAPE Seattle America 2015
national convention & expo

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Rock Paper Scissors

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Presentation Objectives

1. To provide a **historical context** of US Youth Soccer's National Youth Coaching License and the "Game in the Child" model.

2. To provide the implications of **lessons learned** and impact on participants related to the curriculum's use of Theory to Practice, pedagogy and coaching efficacy.

3. To discuss the **sustained** use of the NYL methodology as articulated by participants.

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Historical Context
How do we serve the rec coach?

- Developed by Dr. Tom Fleck, Dr. Ron Quinn, Dr. Dave Carr, Virgil Stringfield & Bill Buren.
- Considered one of the first child-centered coaching courses in the world.
- Piloted in July 1995 (XU)
- January 1996, 1st residential course (FL)

"No Laps, No Lines, No Lectures"

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Challenges & Obstacles

- Previous experiences (e.g., coaching education)
- Coach as a demonstrator
- Coach as ACTIVE participant in practice
- Drills are not effective
- The adult game is different than the youth game

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Theory to Practice

- Philosophy of coaching
- Educational Theorists
  - Piaget's (Developmental Stages)
  - Mosston (Slanty Line)
  - Torbert (Expansion, Equalization, Interactive Challenges)
  - Vygotsky (Zone of Proximal Development)

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Theory to Practice

Principles of Youth Coaching

1. Developmentally Appropriate
2. Clear, Concise, & Correct Information
3. Simple to Complex
4. Safe & Appropriate Training Area
5. Decision Making
6. Implications for the Game

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Theory to Practice

Traditional	Games Model
Drills	*Game/Activity*
Static	Dynamic
Military	Unstructured
Lines	Free Movement
Boring	Fun
No Thought	Decision Making
Age Inappropriate	Age Appropriate

Quinn & Fleck, 1995

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Player Development Model

Game in the Child

LEARNING | PLAYING

Player Attributes | Organization Culture & Context | Coach Attributes

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Daily Focus and Structure

Each day addresses the cognitive, psychomotor, and psychosocial aspects of an age group.

- U6
- U8
- U10
- U12

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Developmentally appropriate activities

- Staff and Candidates
- Game / Activity Classifications
  - Body Awareness
  - Maze Games
  - Target Games

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Candidate Evaluation

- Written statement of coaching philosophy
- Written laws exam
- An oral presentation on a specific topic
- Practical field assessment with one of three age-groups
- Video Review

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The Research

- How does the NYL influence Coaching Efficacy?

- What is the "staying" power of the NYL?

- Cohort (24 courses, 640 participants, 21 states)
  - 2010 Pre-test and Post-test
  - 2012 2-year Post-test with qualitative questions

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Lesson's Learned

- ~30% response rate
- Mostly educated Caucasian males
- Increase in Coaching Efficacy (2010)
  - Significant differences were found between general Coaching Efficacy (CE), Motivation Efficacy (ME), Game Strategy Efficacy (GSE), and Character Building Efficacy (CBE)
  - But not Technique Efficacy (TE)
- Sustained Coaching Efficacy (2012)
  - But slight decline in Motivation Efficacy

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Lesson's Learned

I want to thank you for having the **vision** for putting together the National Youth License. I have recently taken my UEFA B license and did my NSCAA National Youth a few years ago. I have undergone the USSF D, C and FA preliminary award as well as being a certified Physical Education teacher. **I have to say without a shadow of a doubt the National Youth is definitely one of the best licenses I have undergone**; its philosophy and its user friendly atmosphere set it apart from all other American licenses. I am not aware if you know this or not but many people from the UK and their academies are coming to the US to undergo the license. I thank you for allowing the US to lead the world in grass roots football. Thanks for sharing your vision of releasing the game within each and every child worldwide (Personal correspondence, September 17, 2007).

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Lesson's Learned

This course was fantastic. I already knew the "what" to teach part, but gained a great deal of information on **HOW** to coach (personal communication, November 9, 2010)!

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Describe in what ways your coaching practices have changed or not.

- Developmentally Appropriate (31%)
- Guided Discovery (13%)
- More organized (9%)
- Player Centered (7%)
- Provide empowering environment (8%)
- Ask more questions (5%)
- No change (4%)

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Please describe any barriers or obstacles you faced implementing the NYL methodology.

- None (21%)
- Self (19%)
- Parents (17%)
- Other Coaches and Administrators (11%)
- Players (5%)

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Please describe any observations you have seen with regard to your players' reaction to the NYL methodology.

- 68% Positive comments

  C62: My players have begun to be **more creative** in their play, their **decision making** has me pleasantly surprised at times. I think they are **learning and watching** more now.

  C123: I have seen a great deal of change in the children. They enjoy being able to **think for themselves**, and grow as players at their **own pace**. Practices have been **fun**, and the **kids can't wait until the next training session**.

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Have you had the opportunity to share the NYL methodology with other coaches?

- 75% Yes (coaches, parents, players, and own kids)

  C77: I now oversee **230 volunteer** coaches and consistently preach the NYL methodology through coaching education sessions, meetings, practice plans and emails.

  C152: I have a **co-coach**. He has a command style and I am trying to convince/convert him to a guided discovery. It's been tough but I think I am making some headway.

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Staying Power

- C39: I believe this should be the **most important** license within US Soccer. Due to it's importance in developing a love for the sport and retention of players it should be completely re-evaluated by coaching staff that solely specialize in those age groups. The video analysis was very helpful to most coaches.

- C50: The best coaching training I have ever received. It was brutal and humbling, but it prepared me to coach to a higher level but more importantly, it gave me a **boost of confidence.**

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Staying Power

C66: Without the NYL course, I think I would have taken a totally different coaching path and that path probably would have turned kids away. Our clubs youth academy program started with 8 players and under my tenure we have grown to 60 players with a 99% retention rate. The kids are happy and love playing.

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Conclusions

US YOUTH SOCCER.

- The NYL has staying power.
- Greater time and patience is needed.
- Players become more passionate and take greater ownership of their learning.
- Players are more engaged in practice.
- Coaches are eager to share their experience.
- Parents and other coaches still need to better understand the NYL approach

The Game for All Kids!®

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The Future

- Qualitative studies on specific clubs who fully implement the NYL methodologies
- Assess athlete retention in teams and clubs that utilize the NYL methodologies.
- Studies that investigate the athletes responses and motivation of coaches that utilize the NYL methodologies
- Develop an assessment to analyze coaching behaviors of clubs that utilize the NYL methodologies

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"Play, well planned, can become a pleasurable means (tool) by which children can build
a strong 'I can' feeling while gaining many of the foundation skills that make the
process of gradually reaching our existing potential, not only one of survival, but one of
expansion to deal effectively with an increasingly complex and stressful world."

Dr. Marianne Torbert