

Wisconsin Players Identified for Regional and National Soccer Pools

When you watch the United States Women's and Men's soccer teams take the pitch in the Olympics or in the World Cup, you might wonder what path led to those players being identified for possible inclusion in those elite groups? Over three hundred young soccer players from Wisconsin begin that journey every year as a result of participation in the US Youth Soccer Region II Olympic Development Program (ODP) trainings, camps, and tournaments. Each year, several of these players have been identified for participation on regional and even national teams through the ODP process. Over thirty college coaches and representatives from US national teams observed the US Youth Soccer Region II ODP trainings.

Nationally, ODP alumni include seventeen out of eighteen players on both the current women's and men's US national teams, players on many collegiate, professional, adult amateur, international rosters and in the soccer coaching ranks.

"Many of these players will see international competition at a very early age," said Jim Launder, Director of Coaching, Wisconsin Youth Soccer. "However, the main purpose of ODP is to develop the individual player. Wisconsin has contributed significantly to raising the level of soccer in the United States over the years primarily through ODP."

While ODP encourages and supports the trainings offered by club soccer, it provides a venue for the best players to become better. ODP teams are formed at the state association and regional levels, made up of the best players in various age groups based on birth year. The US Youth Soccer ODP was formed in 1977 to identify a pool of players in each age group from which the national team is selected for international competition; to provide high-level training to benefit and to enhance the development of players. At the state association level, pools of players are identified in each eligible age group and brought together as a team to develop their skill through training and competition. From the state pools and subsequent teams, players are identified for regional and national pools and teams.

Wisconsin ODP is administered through the Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association. The Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association (WYSA) is affiliated with the US Youth Soccer Association and is a member of Region II, the Midwest region of the United States. WYSA has nearly 140 member clubs and has over 52,000 registered players throughout the State of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin ODP – Developing Players Since 1977

For additional information on ODP registration and other youth soccer programs, go to <http://www.wiyouthsoccer.com>.