



Anthony Wayne United Soccer Club

P.O. Box 151

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Introduction

This report is prepared after careful observation from tryouts through the completion of this fall season. I also used feedback from the parent survey to back up some of my points and ideas. This report is prepared to help continue the improvement of our organization and help provide relevant programs that help players to improve their skills and enjoy the game.

Brian T. Billings

AW United, Director of Player Development

Positives

1. Improvement of Coaching Base

Over the past year, our coaching base has improved dramatically in my opinion. The number of licensed coaches has grown unbelievably. By my count, we have 13 coaches with at least a D license. Many of these coaches achieved their licensure this past March. We need to continue to tweak and maintain coaching education to match up with what will be coming from USSF.

2. Connection with the community/high school

Over and over I hear many people comment on how they like the community aspect of our club. They like that their kids are playing with people they go to school with, neighbors they can car pool with, etc. There are also comments about how they like the connection with the high school. The high school summer camp and being ball people for games hopefully continues to build this connection and sense of unity.

3. Improving Facilities

Our facilities are continuing to improve. The indoor facility is nice for what it is and should be used accordingly. It is great for small sided games and really working on kid's individual skills. The training facility looks great and should be ready to go for the spring season. It will be great for the club to have kids together at the same site with space and goals.

4. Continued Growth

We continue to grow and expand as a club. We should see continued growth over the next five years providing we continue to build on what we have going for us. We need to continue to focus on the U-9 and U-10 levels and getting players into the program. It takes at least a season to catch kids up and get the familiar with the basics of what we are doing. Building a large base means that by U-13 we will have an established group of players. We need to especially focus on getting younger girls into the game.



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Areas of Improvement

1. Large Gap in Playing Interest

I maintain that we have one of the hardest jobs of any clubs. We have a wide range of playing interest in this club. We have players who just want to show up here and there and be a part of soccer. We have committed players who make most scheduled activities and really enjoy the sport. Then we have kids who live and breathe soccer. They want to be playing all the time and really have self committed to the sport. Our task is to provide programming to meet as many people's needs as possible.

My work is to modify our programming to provide additional opportunities for our players. Players need to be presented with the Olympic Development Program (ODP) opportunity when they get of age. Footskill sessions are now set up and organized to help eliminate some of the previous hassle. As to training, my recommendation is we look to expand training options for those interested, NOT MANDATORY. The example I have been working on is to provide 3 sessions per week. One team session, one age group session, and one optional session set up in two year age groupings if needed. This will provide additional training opportunities for those interested and help them become technically more proficient.

2. Coaching Education/Evaluation

Our coaching has improved dramatically over the last few years. We need to continue to focus on this aspect. We need to find volunteers who have knowledge of the game if possible. Continued oversight of our new coaches will help to identify strengths and weakness to address. We need to work with our coaches to decrease the over-coaching that is prevalent in our game. Players need to be put in small sided games and activities where they have freedom to be creative and take risks. Too many of our players do not want the ball and simply smack it somewhere. Coaches need to be held accountable for their actions.

3. Technical Deficiencies

Our players still have technical issues at the older age group. We get kids into the high school that do not know how to properly strike a ball, control balls, juggle, etc. Coaches must resist the win now mentality for the benefit of their players and their future. Guidance over our volunteer coaches should help observe who needs assistance in these areas. Added training time will also help players reach a higher technical level.

4. Utilizing Resources Better

We need to reexamine at how we are using our resources. We have a limited number of paid coaches with practical playing experience. Our dilemma is how



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to best use these coaches with our parent volunteers. I think we need to make sure every U-13 and U-14 team has a paid coach (except developmental teams). I think by this point parents have made it clear they want to take things to the next level. I really think our focus should be on breaking things into two groups; U9-U-11 and U-12-U14.

My recommendation is that we use our parent volunteer core with paid personnel overseeing at the U-9-11 age groups. There are too many games to attend to use our paid coaches effectively. The goal should be to build technical skills especially ball control with this group. Tactics, formations, set plays, etc. should all take a back seat to basic technical skills. When we get to U-12 and older we should provide paid coaching to take those interested to the next level. We will always lose a player or two to other clubs, but our goal should be to provide a competitive atmosphere for our players to grow in.

5. Improving Communication

Our communication in the past has been atrocious. How has this organization not had a parent email list until today? We are making big strides with the parent survey and with the email list. We need to make sure that parents are advised that the website is being updated regularly now and they should be looking at it. Coaches and managers need to pass along announcements as a secondary option. Also, parents should contact me with their questions and comments so I can know what is going on. The sad thing with the survey is so many of those comments should be things I am being told and acting on.

Communication also needs to be done in regards to our club philosophy, what we strive to do, and what good soccer is. Many of the comments expressed show a disappointment with wanting to build footskills, individual skills, and a large base. Many parents want to win games when you boil it down. Educating our parents on the laws of the game, what we are trying to do, and what their conduct needs to be, will be a continual goal and process.

Conclusions

We have many things going for us as an organization. We need to continue to focus on providing programs and coaching that builds the level of our players to a higher level. Our facilities will continue to grow and allow more opportunities for us. We need to continue to find, educate, and keep quality paid and volunteer coaches. This will be one of our biggest tasks as a club.