

# Ohio Premier Newsletter



**Issue Date: February 8, 2008**

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**Please visit our website, as it is continuously being updated!**

**[www.opsoccer.com](http://www.opsoccer.com)**

# **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

## **BY: MIKE ZAZON**

### President's Message

Happy New Year to everyone in the Ohio Premier family! A lot has been happening over the last few months as we prepare for the quickly approaching Spring Season. We have seen the opening of our new indoor facility, The Ohio Premier Sports Complex, the completion of our first online OP Parent's Survey, and the preparation for our Senior Recognition Night on Sunday, February 24.

The OP Sports Complex is fully operational and a wonderful place to maximize your daughter's individual and team training. I hope you are enjoying it as much as I am. Bringing this facility to OP is the first step in the Board of Director's vision for the future. Of course, as we have said many times, giant leaps forward like this are not possible without the incredible dedication and commitment of our parents and friends of the club. Time permitting at the Senior Recognition Night, look for an update on the Board's vision for the club in the next 3 to 5 years. Stay tuned! These are very exciting times for us.

Speaking of exciting times, please make sure you and your family can attend the Recognition Night for our outgoing Senior class. This is going to be a fast paced, up-tempo evening complete with both a silent and live auction along with numerous awards and congratulations to players at all levels of the club. See you at Dublin Jerome High School starting at 4:30 on Sunday, February 24.

Lastly, your Board and the Directors of Coaching have spent a great deal of time analyzing our club wide survey. In addition to a parent's summary in this newsletter, you can look forward to some tangible changes as a result of the feedback you provided us. We are dedicated to making OP the best club we can possibly be!

See you on the fields,

Mike Zazon  
President

## OP Parents Survey Findings

The results are in and the Board along with the Directors of Coaching have reviewed the responses submitted from our first online club wide survey for the U9 – U14 age groups. Of course the survey was and continues to be confidential unless you specifically asked to be contacted by one of us on the Board.

The largest number of respondents came from the families with players at the “Black” tier level while the U12 age group had the largest number responding from the team side of things. The average respondent has been with the club for 3 to 5 years. To boil this down to a brief summary is difficult but I have broken it out in to three areas of opportunities to make positive changes.

### **Coaching**

You have expressed a desire for coaches at all levels of the organization to be more approachable for questions, comments, and discussion. We know that to be a top notch organization we must be willing to listen to all types of suggestions and comments. Having said that, I respectfully ask that if you have a question or comment, please wait for the appropriate time to speak with the coaches. Before and after training is the ideal time to approach your coach. Before and after matches should be a time reserved for the coaches to prepare for or reflect on their team’s performance. Selecting the right time to talk with the coach will maximize the message you want to convey. The directors of coaching will be meeting with the parents of the various age groups in OP to further discuss the survey and set expectations for the future.

### **Team Responses**

Very high marks were reserved for our Parent Administrators. You also expressed a desire for updated team web pages. Our game plan is to set some minimum standards for all OP Team web pages within the confines of player safety. We want our website to reflect all of the hard work and dedication of players, parents, and the entirety of the organization.

### **The Player Experience**

There were a large number of responses concerned with the Fit2Play program. The biggest area of concern was the coach to player ratio resulting in too much idle time standing in lines. Our corrective action is to strive for and achieve better planning by your coaches for a more efficient and fun experience. Keep in mind that Fit2Play is designed to be more core body strengthening, body posturing and preparedness, proper technique to prevent injury (especially when fatigued) than aerobic fitness training.

We are also addressing the opportunity to make our tryout experience more understandable for all players trying out for OP. As a result of your feedback, we will be designing a handout available on the website and at the time of the tryout that describes what your player can expect. We also had a variety of parent responses regarding a concern about teams already being chosen prior to tryouts. The coaching staff does a preliminary review of all players but does not go into tryouts with any preconceived decisions on teams. The entire coaching staff plays a role in determining teams and ultimately the Directors of Coaching will, if necessary, make final decisions on all teams. As I am sure you know, tryouts are a time of high anxiety for all involved. As parents, we can set the tone for our daughters by encouraging them to just go out and try to enjoy the experience. This is a great time to lead by example with a calm demeanor. It has been our experience, and backed by research, that players perform better when external anxiety is minimized.

One other area to mention here to maximize your daughter’s OP soccer experience is to encourage skills training at home. All of our successful players at all levels of the club have practiced juggling and other foot skill at home on their own. “UNC Coach Anson Dorrance once witnessed Mia Hamm bent over gasping for air when no one else was watching”. Mia Hamm herself has said many times that Champions work hardest when no one else is around. We are also considering using our website for some video training tools for our players to use at home for improving their individual skills.

If you have any further questions or concerns, I encourage you to seek out any of us on the Board of Directors or the Directors of Coaching. We are committed to helping all of your daughters achieve their soccer dream and being the best they possibly can be. Thanks for your help and we will be sending out a similar survey to the older OP team parents later in the spring.

Mike Zazon  
President

# **DIRECTORS REPORT**

## **BY: KEVIN DOUGHERTY**

Different coaches believe different things.

Phillip Troussier (former national team manager of Nigeria, Japan and South Africa) has stated, "The first condition of a coach is to dream- you need passion to build your team. I have an image of what I want to produce, transmit". He goes on to say, "I believe that 60% of the result comes from the relationship between the coach and the players".

Alex Ferguson, of Manchester United fame, also saw the role of the coach as essential. He has stated, "When I first started coaching, my main job as a coach was to improve my players, shape my team, balance my team and get them to play football which I enjoyed". He further continued that, "The key role of the coach is to make a decision—Many people know the answers, but not everyone is prepared to make the tough decision". ([www.soccer-expert.com](http://www.soccer-expert.com))

The Directors of Coaching have looked over the parent survey and have taken the responses as an opportunity to reevaluate what we do here at OP. The two coaches above deal with very high level players and their livelihood is based upon results. Either you win or you find another place to work. Results matter!

OP has a different level of player to work with than Professional or National Team players but we still need to get results. The question is what are the results that matter to us? Winning every game, tournament and competition we enter, State Cups, Regional Championships, National Championships? The truth is those are really nice accomplishments but can be attained in a manner that does more harm to relationships than the honor of holding up the trophy.

In the end our results are fashioned from the relationships we form with players, their families, and the relationships the players form as they progress through our club over the years. Those results/relationships are enduring. If we do our jobs well, we hope we are able to bring a spirit to our young ladies that will enable them to deal with what life throws at them and handle each event with Dedication, Discipline and Teamwork! Ultimately we would like to have an OP player represent the United States in a major world championship such as the Olympics and/or World Cup but not at the expense of those special relationships.

We (the staff) only want what is best for your daughter and want to help in anyway we can to make this an enjoyable, rewarding experience. It is not always perfect, but we admit it. The parent survey is one tool for us to better understand the demands we place on families and the concerns some parents express. We really appreciate your feedback. The staff is always looking to find better ways to communicate to all involved. We are working on ways to be more effective communicators. Please do not hesitate to communicate your thoughts to the staff, but be mindful of time and place to voice your thoughts. We do a fairly good job communicating but it only improves with thoughtful and insightful dialogue among the parents and staff that improves the quality of the club.

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One of the new items on our table is forming an Academy at U9 and U10 age groups. It is a recommendation from our National Staff and Technical Directors to implement in all clubs. We currently cannot form these Academies with the current rules in which MOSSL operates. It is something we have been trying to implement in those age groups for years. The Academy would change the way we do business in those age groups. Rather than having green, black and white teams, all of the professionally coached kids in each age group would train together. Teams for tournaments would be picked from the pool and would likely change from tournament to tournament. This allows girls to move fluidly between teams as they develop at different rates and at different times, to always be pushed by those of similar skills and reduces the pressure and anxiety of annual tryouts to make a white, black or green team. Obviously, educating everyone will be paramount with regards to the success of this program. Indiana, as well as many other state associations, has gone to the Academy program with good results and, we are currently looking at what is working and what needs to be tweaked before Ohio implements this program. We are hoping the clubs we associate with will proceed with OP and implement this soon and potentially spearhead the program here in Ohio, possibly before it is mandated. Your thoughts are more than welcome to [kdoughe952@aol.com](mailto:kdoughe952@aol.com).

OP is currently looking to have a team in the WPSL <http://www.wpsl.info>. It is the premier women's league in this country and hopefully will give players an opportunity to develop for their respective colleges and for the new women's pro league starting up in 2009. The team will be formed from former OP players who currently play in college, our oldest high school players and talented college players from our region such as OSU. Games will be hosted at one of the Dublin High Schools and be a festive event for our younger OP players, their families and other soccer fans throughout Central Ohio. They will play a schedule throughout the Midwest from May until early August.

The outdoor season is upon us and we will begin when the weather allows. We cannot TRAIN at Avery or Darree until the 1<sup>st</sup> of April so your coaches will find space at local schools and other parks. Fortunately, we have the indoor facility to use if weather prevents us from training outside. The Tournament schedule is complete and provides a variety of competition and new opponents for our Teams. We are going to some new events for a variety of reasons. Tournament hotel issues are being dealt with and have caused concerns for all. Tournaments are fundraisers for clubs and thus some of the issues we are experiencing are a result of finding alternative ways to maximize profits for the host club.

Juggling Club is handing out shirts at an impressive rate. The list is growing daily. We have added a U9 to the 500 club. The Juggling Club is simply a means for us to encourage our players to work on their own. We are working on implementing some type of fitness club similar to the Presidential Fitness Award used in schools but with the emphasis on soccer fitness. We hope to have this club and other skills club up and running by the fall.

Upcoming Events:  
Check opsoccer.com for details

Yours in soccer,  
Kevin Dougherty and staff

**2/17/2008: OP COLLEGE  
SYMPOSIUM AT THE MOSSL  
OFFICE**

**2/24/2008: CLUB / SENIOR  
BANQUET**

### **OP College Symposium**

**When: February 17th from 1-3 pm  
Where: MOSSL office**

This is open to **any OP player and parent** U15 and up and is highly encouraged for those U16-U17. It is an informative meeting which covers general college recruiting at all levels, NCAA recruiting rules, etc.

# PROFESSIONALLY ASSISTED PROGRAM AND OP JUNIORS REPORT BY: SHANE WOODRUFF (WOODY)

## PROFESSIONALLY ASSISTED PROGRAM

This spring we will be fielding a record 11 teams in MOSSL play. We are thrilled about the growth of this program. It continues to get stronger by the season. We will plan on starting our outdoor training as soon as the weather permits, which we hope is in mid-March. The spring tournaments have been set and are as follows:

May 10-11 Sidney Mayfest <http://mayfestsoccer.com/> all teams u9-u17

May 17-18 MOSSL Tournament u9, u10, u11

May 24-25 Starburst Tournament u15, u17 <http://www.starburstsoccer.com/>

May 31-June 1 MOSSL Tournament u12, u13, u14

## OP JUNIORS

We have continued to grow our Juniors program, and this past winter has been no exception. It seems like each week we have new kids signing up after learning about our program from other players and families. This spring we plan on starting the Juniors session the first week of April. We will be posting all the times and dates on our web page by mid/late February.

### OHIO PREMIER SPORTS COMPLEX

It has been a great first 3 months in our new indoor facility. It is always nice to know that we have a place that OP can call home. As we move forward with this building, we are **always** trying to improve. With that said, there are a few items that we would like to address. First, we want to make sure we are keeping our kids safe. Parents - the locker room is for players only! The playing field is for players and coaches only. We need to try and keep the turf free of debris and other biological matter brought into the building on shoes. Parents are more than welcome in our new parents lounge or in the commons area. Next, we want to make sure that no horseplay or kicking of balls is done outside of the field. Siblings are welcome but need to be watched especially in the loading dock area. It is still a work in progress and has some areas that can be dangerous. We would hope that everyone will treat this facility like it is your own, which means helping keep it clean and without issues. If you see something that needs attention, please let one of the staff know so it can be dealt with. We are going to do everything we can to continue to improve this facility, and any help you can give would be greatly appreciated, as without your help this would not be possible.

**We will be having a Corn Hole Tournament for parents on Saturday, March 1st starting at 7pm. Entry fee is \$20 per two-person team or \$10 for a single player. Feel free to bring in refreshments and enjoy a good time with other OP families and friends. We will set up brackets in a double elimination tournament. Winners can split the prize with the club or donate it back to the facility to help offset the lease.**

# **DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS REPORT**

## **BY: RUTH RUDIBAUGH**

**OP BANQUET:** Be sure to make plans to attend the OP Club / Senior Recognition Banquet on February 24th. Your team Parent Administrator is collecting names. Please pay your parent administrator by Feb. 13. Details on our website at [www.opsoccer.com](http://www.opsoccer.com). Lots of fun is planned. This includes both professionally coached groups as well as parent coached groups! **Don't miss it!**

**OP INVITATIONAL:** The wheels are in motion for the 10th annual OP Invitational tournament to be held September 13-14. We are still looking for a few committee members, particularly from the current U9 and U13 age groups. Please contact Ruth Rudibaugh if you are interested in contributing your gift of time.

**FEES:** Lastly, a reminder that the final fee payment was due February 1st. Final credits were applied by 1/29. Outstanding balances at the start of Spring season will prevent players from participating in club activities, trainings, games and Fit 2 Play sessions.

Ruth is looking for a Community Service Coordinator.

This person would be responsible for coordinating community service events for our girls. This could include things such as food drives, beautification projects, volunteering in special need situations, among many other opportunities. Our club would like to show the girls the importance of giving back to the community.

Contact Ruth if interested or for more information at [rrudibaugh@gmail.com](mailto:rrudibaugh@gmail.com).

## **UNIFORM COORDINATOR REPORT**

### **BY: KATHY SCHLEMITZ**

#### **Apparel/Uniforms**

All orders have been completed, and there will not be another order going in until Spring.

As a reminder though, I still have the following available for purchase:

OP Knit Hats — \$20

OP Baseball style hats, white and black— \$20

OP Sweatpants (adult sizes only) white/black/gray— \$12

Training shirts— \$10

OP Car Decal—\$5

Please e-mail Kathy Schlemitz at [kschlemi@columbus.rr.com](mailto:kschlemi@columbus.rr.com) if you are interested in purchasing any of the above items.

# FIT 2 PLAY REPORT

## BY: JEFF TURNER

We had our first Fit 2 Play Athlete of the Month: Rachel Jacoby of the 12 Black. Every training session Rachel showed a positive attitude and gave 100%. We have a picture of Rachel at the OP Facility and she got a large framed picture that was beautifully done by MK Photography.

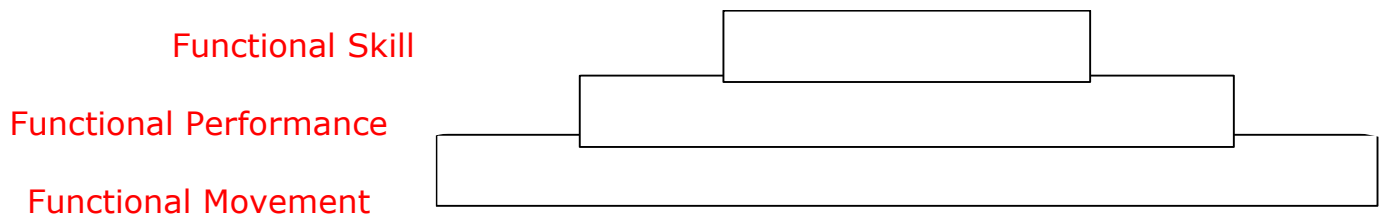
The Fit 2 Play Team has screened over 200 of our girls and still has more to evaluate. Many of these will be done at the OP facility before or after trainings. Many of you received the parent letter that explained what we are doing and the “why” behind it. Below is an excerpt for those that did not get a copy:

Fit2Play is about preparing the athlete to meet the demands of their sport. Our plan is to assess and address existing individual weaknesses and imbalances, and then strengthen and condition per the needs of each athlete.

With the proper strength and conditioning program, sport specific training, and a rehabilitative and pre-screening tool such as Muscle Activation Techniques\* (MAT) and the Functional Movement Screen (FMS), the number of currently injured athletes can be reduced and the possibility of future problems may be reduced.

A focal point of this program is to identify any significant limitations or asymmetries (left-right imbalances) at the very basic levels of movement. These limitations *should not* be overlooked, because our bodies need to be free of imbalances and restrictions PRIOR to training, conditioning, and competitive fitness activities. Such limitations and imbalances can significantly distort motor learning, movement perception and efficiency in body mechanics.

In order to better understand the Fit2Play Philosophy let us show you the “Performance Pyramid”. This simple diagram is used to give you a mental image and better understanding of human movement and how it must be constructed from the bottom up.



The foundation of the pyramid represents the ability to move through fundamental patterns. The second and smaller pillar is concerned with performance and efficiency of movement and power. It is important *not* to get sport specific with testing at this level of the Performance Pyramid. The top and smallest pillar is sport specific skill. This last pillar is a direct result of the two layers below. The lower two pillars are where athletes working with Fit2Play will spend a majority of their time. This is also the time where a focused rehabilitation, strength and conditioning program will have its greatest effects. If your body is still dysfunctional due to a current or past injury, your pyramid is imbalanced, and your best performance cannot be realized.

This component of the Fit2Play System will provide each of your athletes with a grade, a number between 1 and 21. There are 7 basic movements and a perfect score of an individual movement is 3!  $7 \times 3 = 21$ .

Understand that we are using this tool among others to best evaluate your student athlete and recommend the best means of intervention and training possible. The NFL, specifically the Indianapolis Colts, use these tools and their athletes don't even play if their score is lower than a 14.

***Fit2Plays' ultimate goal is to minimize, if not eliminate, the amount of practice and playing time missed by each athlete due to non-contact injuries.***

In order for this to become a reality, each of you as parents, and your athletes MUST adhere to a strict balance of maintenance, recovery, practice and performance. It is important to listen to your young athlete's verbal and non-verbal cues as to pain, dysfunction and need for recovery. Partnering with your chosen medical professionals, implementing her specific strength and conditioning program and corrective tools will provide our athletes with a system second to none.

You are more than welcome to contact Fit2Play's Jeff Turner or Rick Jones directly for your athlete's FMS score, assessment results, and recommendations to help them have their best season yet.

I would also like to address how some of the summer sessions were implemented...not well. When we had 50 plus athletes at one time it was hard to give the instruction that makes what we do so special. This will change moving forward. Another question that came up was the standing around time. We all know that Speed is a desired result, so is first step quickness as well as the ability to accelerate to a ball or past an opponent. The ability to decelerate (stop on a dime) is equally vital. All of these traits need to be done under control before we can realize the athlete's full potential (no matter what age). When we see a player running like she is swimming, it would be derelict of me to have her run sprints hammering home improper movement patterns. Teaching correct movement is usually done at a different pace than team training and then progressed based on each athlete.

Moving forward will we be working on: Proper warm-up and cool-down, running mechanics as well as correct movement patterns. Continued screening with performance testing. Strength and Conditioning per the demands of each athlete and how it fits into the whole year. And please...ask questions.

You can contact:

Jeff Turner at [jeff@fit2playonline.com](mailto:jeff@fit2playonline.com) or  
Rick Jones at [rickjones@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rickjones@columbus.rr.com).