



April 2016

## A message from the Director of Coaching

# US Soccer Player Safety Campaign

## Recognize to Recover

### **WSA Members,**

Most of my contributions the last couple of months have been geared towards the US Soccer Player Development initiatives which came out in August of 2015. We have obviously done our best to inform our members on these changes and many of you also came out for our town hall meeting on Monday March 21st.

In this article I want to address US Soccer's Player Safety Campaign. This initiative was first shared with the soccer community in December of 2015. Additional information on this matter was shared with the public in January of this year. Although a very important initiative, due to all mandated changes by the same federation, this initiative has not gotten the attention it deserves. The campaign is focused on safe play; the prevention of injuries and the management of injuries as they occur. All to ensure that players can enjoy the game in a safe yet challenging environment. The campaign is known as the "recognize to recover program" and so far the focus has been on head injuries (concussions); heat related illnesses and cardiac safety.

Especially the topic of head injuries has been discussed very often the last few years. I'm sure you are well aware that at the professional level in the NFL and MLB this has gotten a lot of attention. In both these sports concussions are common and the governing organizations involved with these sports are working hard to make play safer and ensure that players are given the proper time to recover.

As I'm sure you all know concussions also occur in youth sports and youth soccer is most certainly not an exception on the rule. We for that reason brought in ESPN analyst and former professional player Taylor Twellman to share his experiences and also to address the work he is doing through his organization thinktaylor. Taylor himself saw his playing career cut short due to several concussions and knows how much of an impact they can have on your life if not treated properly.

What are the immediate effects of this campaign? Eliminating injuries from sports is impossible. Simply because they can occur when people participate in sports. However, the soccer federation hopes to decrease the number of injuries and make sure they are managed better by coaches, trainers, parents and players. For that reason US Soccer is recommending, and many youth soccer organizations are requiring immediately, new rules as it relates to heading, as follows:

- Players in U-11 programs and younger shall not engage in heading, either in practices or in games, players 10 years and younger.
- Limited heading in practice for players in U-12 and U-13 programs. More specifically, these players shall be limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of heading training per week, with no more than 15-20 headers per player, per week.

All this information has been shared with the members at our town hall meeting held a few weeks ago and effectively this Spring our teams need to be aware that heading is no longer allowed in league play for players 10 years of age and younger.

For more information on the recognize to recover program, started by the US Soccer Federation please click the link below:

[\*\*US Soccer - Recognize to recover\*\*](#)

**Yours in soccer,**

**Ruben Vloedgraven**

**Director of Coaching**

**doc@WestfieldNJsoccer.com**



# Taylor Twellman Concussion Awareness Recap



The Westfield Soccer Association as well as 100 plus residents and interested parties welcomed Taylor Twellman to our community on March 14 for a discussion on concussion awareness, an important topic in sports today. Twellman is a five time MLS All Star and US Men's National Team player with over 30 caps. He played for the New England Revolution between 2002 and 2009, scoring more goals than anyone else in Major League Soccer during that time. Today, Twellman is the leading ESPN Soccer analyst covering MLS and global soccer events. The evening opened with WSA Trustee, Brian Moynihan, making a few jokes and thanking long time Westfield Soccer Player, Sanjay Sujamthakumar for being the one responsible for securing Taylor's visit to our community. Sanjay sustained a difficult concussion and struggled with his recovery, prompting his outreach to Twellman for help, resulting in a developing friendship overtime. Thank you Sanjay!

After a brief opening video, highlighting Twellman's career and goal scoring prowess, the video ended with a collision near goal that left Twellman with yet another concussion which led to his premature retirement. He did remind us that despite the crash, he scored, maintaining his good sense of humor. Twellman's mission is to raise awareness and open dialogue about concussions and since retirement, Twellman has created the THINKTaylor foundation, a charitable organization regarding sports-related concussions. Twellman has agreed to donate his brain to science after death. His brain could be of use to determine whether or not multiple concussions causes permanent harm to the brain. Twellman Soccer provides programs and tools for players, coaches and organizations across the United States

The event was held at Roosevelt Intermediary School's auditorium, which was set up with two microphone stations for a spirited and sometimes emotional Q&A session. Twellman provided answers and advice based on his life experience and ongoing education about concussions and head trauma, encouraging parents, coaches, and anyone watching a game or practice to adapt the rule of "when in doubt, sit them out". In other words, when a player appears to have engaged in activity that may have concussed them sit them out for the remainder of the day.

The event concluded with a parting gift from our President, Steve Aronson, presenting Twellman

and Sanjay, with tailored WSA jerseys, thanking them for their contribution.

## [FOLLOW US](#)

Westfield Soccer Association is expanding its social media presence and we welcome your support. Please join us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Use hashtag [#westfieldnjsoccer](#) and share your moments with the WSA community.

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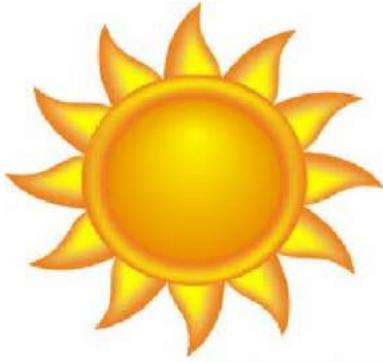


## **FC PREMIER - Tryouts for the 2016-2017 Season now open**

The FC Premier program is proud to announce the dates for their open tryouts for the FC Premier teams for the 2016-2017 seasons. In light of the upcoming changes mandated by USSF, all tryouts will be ran according to birth year. Anyone interested in participating should register through the registration section of the FC Premier website. Although it is not mandatory to attend both tryouts, attending more than 1 tryout will give every player the opportunity to showcase themselves more than once, in front of the FC Premier staff. For more information on the FC Premier program and its programs history, please check the link attached.



[Learn More](#)



**2016**  
**HOT**  
**SUMMER**  
**NIGHTS**



## *Hot Summer* *Nights*

Tuesday's and Thursday's

Late June through early August

Open to all WSA Members

Free of charge

Location: Roosevelt School

Fun, free play environment to get  
your soccer on!

**LEARN MORE**

### **Summer Camp 2016**

This summer the Westfield SA will once again offer all its members the opportunity to take part in a fun and challenging summer camp. The camp this year will take place the week of 8/15. The camp curriculum is specifically designed

to ensure all our players are able to enjoy the beautiful game while testing their skills under the guidance of professional trainers assigned by the WSA. The curriculum will include training of the fundamental soccer skills, competitive scrimmages, fun games and a World Cup day amongst other challenges.

All players born between 2008-2010 can sign up for the half day option (9am-12pm), while all players born 2002-2007 can participate in a camp that runs from 9am-3pm. All players are advised to bring their soccer equipment; lots of water; sun cream and snacks. All full day campers also need to bring a lunch.



Staff: The WSA will bring in professional trainers who not only have experience playing the game, but are real educators of the game of soccer. They are capable of developing an environment in which players are given the opportunity to enjoy themselves while enhancing their skills.

**August 15-19, 2016**

**Half Day**

**Birth year: 2008's - 2010's**

**\$200**

**Full Day**

**Birth Year: 2002's - 2007's**

**\$250**

**Location: TBD**

**Visit Our Website!**

## **Travel Pre-Season Camp**

This upcoming Summer the WSA will provide all travel players the opportunity to take part in a pre season camp to help them prepare for the upcoming season. Players will be divided based on age, gender and ability to ensure maximum results from the camp. From Monday through Friday all players will receive 2 hours of training provided by the staff assigned by the WSA. The curriculum for the camp will be designed by the director of coaching for the WSA and the professional training staff. All training will be in line with the age appropriate priorities with a focus on the technical and tactical needs of our players. Technical training will be enhanced by introducing players to game like situations in which they will also be tactically challenged. All participating players will also receive a t-shirt and soccer ball when they participate in the camp.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**August 22-26, 2016**

\$150

U9 and U10's	9AM-11AM
U11s and U12's	5-7PM
U13's, U14's and U15's	7-9PM

Location: TBD

Westfield Soccer Association, ., Westfield, NJ 07090

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