

Wellness to World Cup

Last week, the Canadian Soccer Association officially launched its Long Term Player Development (LTPD) program at a media conference in Montreal prior to Canada's World Cup qualification game against St. Vincent and the Grenadines (won by Canada with an aggregate score of 7-1).

Lots of good work has been done around the world in recent years with regard to development programs for soccer. Holland, the United States and Australia in particular have looked at the "total" picture - from the earliest soccer ages to old timers' soccer.

We at the World of Soccer developed our Total Player Development program way back in the early 90's.

Canada has experienced a number of disappointing years over the last two decades and only the women's program, successes at FIFA's men's U 20 World Cup and the CONCACAF Gold Cup have given us something to cheer about.

Several years ago, the process of developing the LTPD program began with a group of very experienced soccer educators (including yours truly) from across Canada and other parts of the world. As you will see if you open the link, it was a very inclusive project.

The Board of Directors of Canadian Soccer recently completely endorsed Wellness to World Cup as the roadmap for the future and with the recent appointment of Stephen Hart, as the CSA's Technical Director, the scene is set for process to begin.

Indeed it already has as Provincial Associations and clubs that had a sneak preview of the program have already taken the recommendations and begun to run with them.

I think that Volume I of the LTPD, Wellness to World Cup, is the most comprehensive pathway for any community/provincial/state/national association that has ever been produced.

In my sardonic, tongue-in-cheek way, I have been known to say that "it's the best work by Canadian Soccer that may never be used in Canada."

People laugh, but most get the point - the document means nothing unless it is implemented. It is essential that we plan for the future of soccer and the health of our children and adults. After all it is "Wellness to World Cup."

While every effort has been made to use scientific methods in the collection of the data it remains a "work-in-progress" and probably always will be. The "experts" involved in the LTPD group all have their own opinions.

In that respect we would welcome your comments, observations, criticisms and additional considerations. Please send them to me and I will pass them on to the group (tony@worldofsoccer.com).

[Click here for further information and to see Volume 1.](#)