

# 2010 NSCAA Convention Clinic Outline Book

## Jerome de Bontin, Former President AS Monaco FC

### **European Developmental Academies: Separating Fact from Fiction in Potential and Performance**

**TOPIC:** Player Development in the US! How can we change and become truly competitive over the coming years?

What can we learn from the top European Club academies?

**OVERVIEW:** The future success of US Soccer lies in our ability to develop better players, better teams, better coaches, and make the beautiful game attractive to the passionate fans of all ages.

There is a widespread acknowledgement that the organization of US soccer is not conducive to the development of skilled and competitive players. One often categorizes player development in the US as being insufficient and unstructured.

College and pro players demonstrate weaker technical and tactical knowledge than their European and South American counterparts of the same age.

Tradition (high school – college) and the present pyramid structure of US soccer seem to work against the long-term development of the US Player.

#### **QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED AND ANSWERED:**

- 1.) Should American professional and academy clubs look to European clubs for answers?
- 2.) Can the format utilized for decades by clubs such as AS Monaco or AJ Auxerre be copied and replicated by our US clubs?

As one takes a deeper look in the structure of European clubs, one may discover that those clubs derive stronger support from their national federations and that they exhibit broader and more aggressive recruiting patterns than we are familiar with in the US.

- 3.) Do the main differences lie in better coaching, better organization or simply better recruiting?
- 4.) Do the European academies produce or do they recruit talent? Is it purely a numbers game?

**CLOSING STATEMENT:** Using the example of the AS Monaco Academy, which produced the likes of Lilian Thuram, George Weah, David Trezeguet and Thierry Henry, the presentation will attempt to be informative, while challenging the merits and challenges of both the US and European player development organizations.