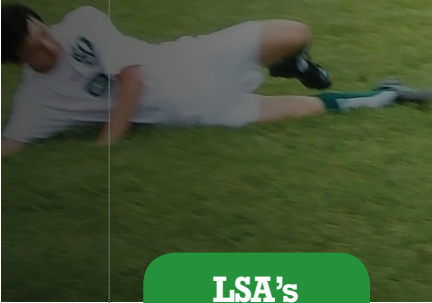


LOOKING AT SUCCESS

LSA '95 Photos by David Linkous



Louisville Soccer's youth programs experience a season of unprecedented wins.

LSA's successful season

(as of May 18)

SPRING, 2010

- LSC '98 East Girls & LSA '93 East Boys – Play for the Cure Champions
- LSA '95 Boys – Louisville Cup Champions
- LSA '92 Boys – Derby Cup Champions

FALL, 2009

- LSA '00 Boys – Louisville Cup Champions
- LSA Men – Open Team Tournament of Champions Winner

By Aidan Kelly

It's certainly been a coming of age this year for 21-year-old **Louisville Soccer**.

This year has seen the club have one of its most improved seasons ever, says club administrator **Gemma Dattilo**.

"We have won five tournaments this season, and had many teams advance to the finals and semi-finals in tournaments," she says.

Louisville Soccer was founded in 1989 by **Michael Hayes, Sam Bick, Dave Fernandez** and **Claudio**

Maldonado with the adult men's program. The team went on to win the U23 men's national championship in 1997.

About 11 years after the first team took to the fields, Louisville Soccer decided to build a youth program, adding boys' (Louisville Soccer Alliance) and girls' (Louisville Soccer Club) teams from ages 9-18.

Today, there are a total of 29 youth teams and four adult squads.

"From our humble beginning in 1989 to today, we have grown to over 80 adult players and

450 youth players," says Dattilo. "In the past year we have added seven new teams and almost 150 youth players."

And with the growth in numbers comes the improvement in the quality of players.

"We had over 20 Louisville Soccer trained players play with the Kentucky Olympic Development Program and seven make their state teams," says Dattilo.

One contributing factor to its improvement was the creation by **Niki McWilliams** of an inclusive developmental program for 4- to 8-year-olds back in 2003.

"The development program is designed to introduce young soccer players to the rules and fundamentals of the game and serves four locations through the city, bringing the game to any player that wishes to play," says Dattilo.

And, of course, Louisville Soccer's diverse and qualified coaching staff helps in no small part also. "We welcome players of all races, cultures, and economic backgrounds," says Dattilo. "Louisville Soccer is about player development and we will do all we can to help anyone interested in playing the game we all love." •

