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## Youth: 2009 boys top 40 clubs

by Paul Kennedy, Thursday, Oct 1, 2009 12:00 AM ET

**FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN** a row, the Baltimore Bays are No. 1 in Soccer America's boys rankings. **1. Baltimore Bays.** The Casa Mia Bays became only the fourth team to win two boys titles at the U.S. Youth Soccer National Championships in the same year when they won the U-19 and U-15 crowns at the 2009 finals. The U-19s finished their youth run as one of the great teams of all time, winning their national title following championships in 2006 (U.S. Youth Soccer U-16s) and 2008 (U.S. Soccer Development Academy U-17/18 age group). With U-15 standouts Malcolm Harris and Michael Gamble, the younger Bays will get a chance to match the U-19s' success.

**2. Dallas Texans.** The Texans won the 2009 U-16 national championship to give it six U.S. Youth Soccer boys titles in the last five years and claim the double (National Championships and National League). Four coaches and five players recently completed a visit to Manchester United as part of the partnership with the English champion. Former Texans include U.S. star Clint Dempsey, Honduran national team midfielder Ramon Nunez and MLS Rookie of the Year candidate Omar Gonzalez.

**3. Michigan Wolves.** The Derby County Wolves (named after the English club that sponsors the program) dominated the 2008-09 U.S. Soccer Development Academy, earning the No. 1 seeds for the playoffs in both age groups and winning the U-15/16 championship. In 2007, the Wolves won their third U.S. Youth Soccer national championship and the second for Coach Lars Richter. The U-17/18s have added U-17 international Soony Saad for the 2009-10 season.

**4. PDA.** The New Jersey team was the only club to send two teams to 2009 Finals Week, the Development Academy's national championship. In 2008, PDA was runner-up in the U-15/16 age group. Teams named Cruyff and Harkes won regional titles in 2007. One of PDA's top prospects is Erik Sa, who played against PDA teams when the club hosted the U-15 national team camp in June.

**5. Andromeda SC.** One of only four teams, along with the Bays, Texans and FC Delco, to win two U.S. Youth Soccer Nationals Championships in the same year, Andromeda captured U-17 and U-18 crowns in 2008 after winning the U-17 title a year earlier. It had a successful inaugural season in the Development Academy, qualifying both its teams for the 2009 playoffs. Andromeda product Dillon Powers won the 2009 Gatorade Player of the Year award and was named to the U.S. U-20 World Cup team.

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**6. LAFC Chelsea.** One of several major clubs partnering with English club Chelsea, LAFC finished second and fifth in the 2008 Development Academy's U-17/18 and U/15-16 age groups, respectively. Players from the U-17/18 team are now scattered at colleges across the country. Former MLS players Dan Calichman and Teddy Chronopoulos head LAFC's soccer staff.

**7. CASL.** Celebrating its 35th anniversary in 2009, the North Carolina program has been ever present on the national scene in recent years. It has had teams reach the Development Academy's Final Weeks both years, and it has sent its U-14 team to the U.S. Youth Soccer National Championships in two of the last three years.

**8. Arsenal FC.** The club from soccer-rich Southern California has achieved remarkable success in U.S. Youth Soccer competitions with four national titles in the last two decades and at least one regional crown in each of the last six years. Sebastian Velasquez recently joined the U-17 national team residency program.

**9. Carmel United.** The Indiana club set the bar high for Development Academy teams by winning national titles in the first two years of the program (U-15/16s in 2008 and U-17/18s in 2009). The Academy teams are now playing under the new Indiana United name.

**10. FC Delco.** The Pennsylvania club, winner of seven U.S. Youth Soccer national titles over 13 years (1991-2003), remains a force on the national scene. Both Delco teams made the 2009 Development Academy playoffs, and it has produced three Region I champions in the last three years.

**11. Chicago Magic.** The Magic, which has hired former MLS star Raul Diaz Arce as its academy director, has finished sixth and third nationally in the first two seasons of the Development Academy's U-15/16 age group. Perry Kitchen, a U-17 stalwart, is only the latest player from the Magic program to achieve success in the national team program.

**12. Solar SC.** The Texas club, which is building its own soccer complex, won its first U.S. Youth Soccer national championship in 2008 when its U-19s captured the McGuire Cup. It has more talent coming along. High school seniors Trevor Hubbard and Chris Nieto both made the 2009 adidas ESP all-stars.

**13. Chicago Fire.** The highest ranked of five MLS clubs in the Top 40 boys rankings, the Fire took sixth place in the 2008 Development Academy's U-15/16 age group. Top Fire prospects include AJ Jeffries, son of assistant coach Mike Jeffries, and Joel Salmeron.

**14. Real Colorado.** Real Colorado finished fourth in the Development Academy's 2008 U-15/16 and 2009 U-17/18 age group. Taylor Kemp, now at Maryland, was a Starting XI pick both years.

**15. FC Dallas.** In its first year in the Development Academy, the MLS club emerged as the best of the Texas teams. Oscar Pareja was named U-17/18 Coach of the Year. Ruben Luna and Brian Leyva formed one of the best U-15/16 attacking partnerships.

**16. Colorado Rush.** Rush sent teams to the McGuire Cup (U.S. Youth Soccer U-19) final four in 2008 and 2009 and its U-17/18 team finished fourth at the 2008 Development Academy finals.

**17. NJSA 04.** The club founded by Tab Ramos and Rob Johnson, former MetroStars teammates, won the 2008 U-14 U.S. Youth Soccer national championship. It was admitted to the Development Academy for the 2009-10 season.

**18. Real So Cal.** Real So Cal is the winner of U.S. Youth Soccer national championships in four of the last seven years. Academy star Victor Chavez was one of only two '92 players to enter U-17 residency in the fall.

**19. West Coast FC.** West Coast won its first U.S. Youth Soccer national championship when it beat St. Louis Scott Gallagher, 2-0, in the U-14 finals. It also won the 2008 Super Y-League U-15 title. It was the only Southern California club with two players in U-17 residency last fall.

**20. D.C. United.** United was the runner-up in the 2009 Development Academy's U-17/18 age group, the best finish to date by an MLS team. Andy Najar, only 16, led all scorers with four goals while goalie Bill Hamid joined the senior team.

**21. New York Red Bulls.** The Red Bulls, who finished seventh in the 2009 Development Academy's U-15/16 age group, are developing lots of young talent. They have two players, Keith Cardona and John Agudelo, in U-17 residency.

**22. Cal Odyssey.** From California's Central Valley, Odyssey was the sensation of the 2009 Development Academy, advancing to the U-15/16 final as the No. 31 seed. Nathan Smith has since entered U-17 residency, while Isaiah Trejo and Jon-Paul Medina have been called up to the U-18s.

**23. Columbus Crew.** The MLS club has become a force on the highly competitive Ohio youth scene. It was third in the 2008 Development Academy U-17/18 age group and sent Andrew Souders to U-17 residency this fall.

**24. Washington Premier FC.** The Seattle area club has a strong program in the younger age groups. It finished fifth in the 2009 Development Academy U-15/16 age group and had three players - Fischer Gallinger, Jacob Kempf and Denis Kalamar - selected to the U-14 National Development Program.

**25. IMG Academy.** The Florida program's Development Academy teams won both Southeast Division titles in 2009. Led by Andres Acevedo, its U-17/18s finished third at Finals Week.

**26. Vardar SC.** The Detroit club, whose programs have expanded across Michigan and into Missouri, has produced 21 U.S. Youth Soccer regional and three national champions. Craig Duggan is one of the most promising young goalies in the Region II ODP program.

**27. De Anza Force.** The Bay Area club, whose program is headed by former MLS player Jeff Baicher, graduated 19 boys to college programs in 2009. Its top young prospect is Marc Pelosi, who just entered U-17 residency.

**28. Concorde Fire.** The Georgia club finished fifth in the 2008 Development Academy's U-17-18 age group. Fire defender Jordan McCrary is in his third semester at the U-17 residency program.

**29. FC Westchester.** The New York team sent both of its academy teams to the Development Academy playoffs in 2009, a year after its U-17/18 advanced to Finals Week. The club's coaching staff includes former U.S. national team player Boris Bandov.

**30. Discoveries SC.** The sensation of the 2009 National Championships became the first team from South Carolina to win a U.S. Youth Soccer title, completing a perfect run through the state tournament, regionals and nationals.

**31. Triangle United.** The North Carolina club's top team is its '91 Gold team, coached by University of North Carolina coach Elmar Bolowich. It went undefeated

in group play at the National Championships the last two seasons in the U-16 and U-17 age groups.

**32. Kendall Soccer Coalition.** The South Florida club teamed up with USL's Miami FC on its Development Academy program, which sent its U-15/16 and U-17/18 teams to the 2009 playoffs.

**33. St. Louis Scott Gallagher.** The club is product of the merger of Scott Gallagher and St. Louis SC (10 U.S. Youth Soccer championships between them) and Metro United, resulting in two Development Academy teams (Missouri and Metro). SLSG's first youth national championship as a merged club came in late July when it won the U.S. Club Soccer U-16 Super group.

**34. Javanon SC.** Javanon (Farsi for "youth") won U.S. Youth Soccer national championships in 1997 and 2006. It was the only club with two teams entered in the upper boys divisions at the 2009 National Championships. The U-18s finished second and U-17s were sixth.

**35. Schulz Academy.** The South Florida club finished third in the 2008 Development Academy's U-15/16 age group, but its membership was terminated in April 2009. Two former Schulz players, Zachary Herold and Stefan Jerome, are in their fifth semester at the U-17 residency program.

**36. Crossfire Premier.** The Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association's select program was one of 18 programs to send two teams to the 2009 Development Academy playoffs.

**37. Albertson SC.** The New York area club sent its U-15/16s to the 2008 Development Academy's Finals Week and had Brian Rogers (14 goals) and Zak Kupfer (13 goals) named to the 2009 all-conference U-17/18 team.

**38. CZ Elite FC.** The program founded by longtime Southern California coach Cherif Zein dominated the U-17 division at the National Championships, beating Triangle United, 3-2, in the final.

**39. Grand Rapids Crew Juniors.** For the second year in a row, the Michigan team took third place in its age group (U-14s in '08 and U-15s in '09) at the National Championships.

**40. Sereno SC.** The U-15s finished second at the National Championships, the best finish by a boys team since the U-18s were runners-up in 2004.

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