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INFORMATION BULLETIN

Bulletin #: I2023 - 15
Date: March 17, 2023
To: Ontario Soccer, District Membership and Associate Members
CC: Ontario Soccer Board of Directors, Staff
From: Matt Ferreira, Director, Development
Subject: Ontario Player Development League Eight-Year Review

Ontario Soccer is excited to share the findings of an eight-year evaluation of the Ontario Player Development League (OPDL) executed by an independent, third party; Capitis Consulting.

The evaluation report builds on an initial two-year review (conducted in 2016) to provide an in-depth long-term examination of the OPDL with a focus on the core objectives of the program when it was created in 2012-2013 and launched in 2014;

1. *Allow top youth talent to develop optimally without the pressure of a promotion/relegation based system.*
2. *Raise base standards in training and coaching in organizations where the province's top youth players play.*
3. *Create a standardized system of elite player development, in line with world best practices.*
4. *Provide a centralized structure that allows Ontario talent to be scouted more frequently and consistently.*
5. *Ultimately, provide the best opportunity for Ontario's top soccer talent to progress to higher levels of soccer.*

Linked below, you will find the full report, along with an executive and video summary, which describe and summarize the main points, including key findings and recommendations.

-  [OPDL Eight-year Review Full Report](#)
-  [OPDL Eight-year Review Report – Executive Summary](#)
-  [OPDL Eight-year Review Report – Video Summary](#)

Since the launch of the OPDL in 2014, we have been anxiously waiting to see how the Canadian soccer system would be impacted. This eight-year program assessment is an important step in evaluating the OPDL impact on our soccer ecosystem and identifying where improvements can be made with our youth player development pathway. We are elated to see the report affirms the OPDL is achieving its main objectives, and appreciate the recommendations provided on areas of improvement, which we will focus on going forward.



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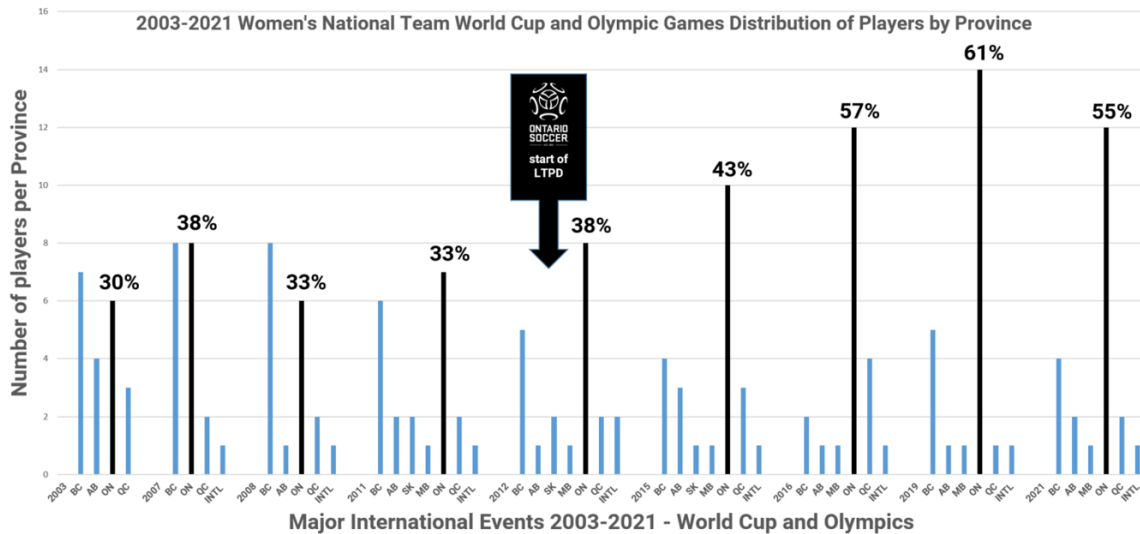
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Ontario Soccer created the OPDL with one clear goal: to create a holistic training and competition environment that best supports youth player development. Since its launch, the program's mandate has grown to include the development of Coaches, Match Officials and Licence Holders (Clubs). The OPDL is one of the country's first standards-based, youth high-performance programs for male and female players from U13 to U17 and combines top-level competition with strict high-performance training standards. Despite the reference to a league in its name, the program's primary focus is about training and development that elevates the provinces' best talent to higher levels of the game including Canada's National Team Program.

Although the tracking of OPDL players' progressions is an area always under refinement, the data currently available is quite positive as illustrated in the graphics below which depict a congruent upward trend between the emergence of Ontario Soccer's Long Term Player Development (LTPD) initiatives, such as the OPDL and League1 Ontario (L10) in 2014, and representation of Ontario players on Canada's National Soccer Teams.




Note: 1. Team roster totals vary event to event, therefore % scale as shown varies.
2. Start of LTPD means Ontario implementation of all Grassroots (U12 and under) LTPD initiatives and the launch of standards based programming via the OPDL & L10



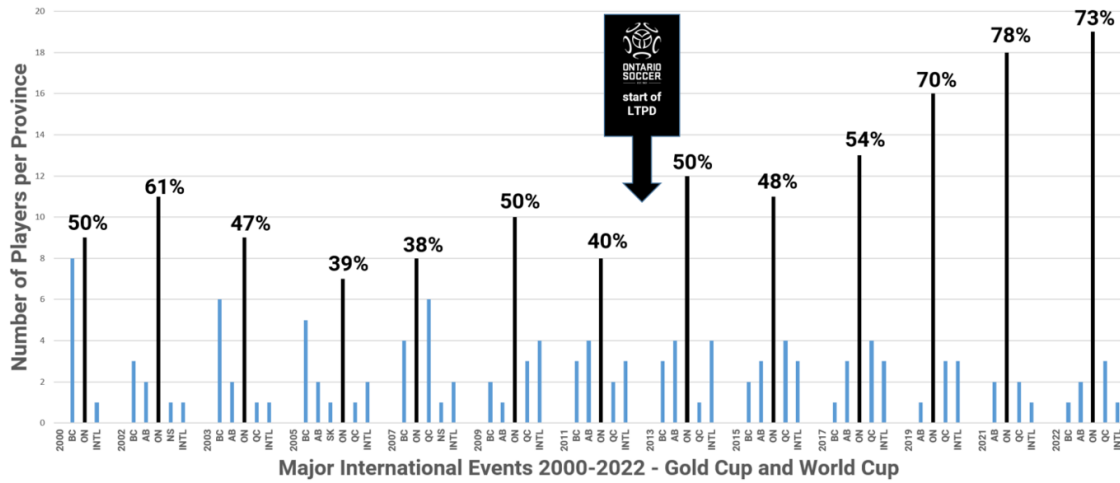
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Men's National Team Representation by Province 2000-2022



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Over the coming weeks, months and years, Ontario Soccer will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the OPDL program and looks forward to working with our Licence Holders, partners and the Ontario Soccer community at large, as we look to advance the game of soccer in Ontario; the engine room of soccer in Canada.

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