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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Youth Soccer Revises Age Verification Process

FEDERAL WAY, WASHINGTON (Tuesday, July 22) – In an effort to minimize potential threats of identity theft, Washington Youth Soccer has recently revised its age verification procedure to safeguard its 128,000 players and families. By partnering with its online registration system provider, Bonzi, Washington Youth Soccer is now able to provide hundreds of Association and Club Registrars a more efficient way to verify and protect sensitive registration information.

Under this new process, Member Associations and Club Registrars using Bonzi will have access to a birth certificate tracking tool that allows them to authenticate and approve a player's information by confirming that the first name, last name and birth date matches a physical birth certificate or other acceptable verification documents (i.e. drivers license, passport, Birth Abroad, or other official government documents). Once this process has been validated by an Association or Club Registrar in the online system, the information will be locked and only accessible to the Member Association/Club.

For those Associations and Clubs not currently using the Bonzi system, Registrars will be required to fill-out verification forms (available at www.wsysa.com) in lieu of retaining copies of sensitive personal documents. Under this process, once a Registrar has initially verified an original proof-of-age document for a player, signatures of both the Registrar and parent are required to complete the age verification form. After each Washington Youth Soccer verification form has successfully been completed, the Association/Club is required to keep a copy of the completed form with their Association/Club. No copies of the original document should be made and kept at the Association/Club. If the Registrar has kept copies of proof-of-age documents for current players, verification forms must be completed according to the new process and filed; no parental signature is needed.

Paper copies of player birth certificates or proof-of-age documents should be shredded or destroyed as soon as the verification forms have been completed and filed. Computer records of birth certificates should also be removed completely from office and home or personal computers. All records should be destroyed or deleted by November 2008. Please contact the State Office if you need assistance with this process.

“Washington Youth Soccer has always considered the privacy and protection of our players to be of vital importance, stated Todd McGann, Washington Youth Soccer's Executive Director/COO. “As one of US Youth Soccer's recognized leaders in Risk Management policy, we have revised this process in an attempt to not only protect our players' personal information, but to greatly reduce the possible liability presented to our Member Associations and Clubs when handling this sensitive information.”

The new age verification process cannot be used for young referees working for Washington Youth Soccer. Each young referee must have a copy of his or her birth certificate in their employment file.

About Washington Youth Soccer

Washington Youth Soccer is the largest youth soccer organization in Washington. Washington Youth Soccer is the state's affiliate for US Youth Soccer, which is the largest sports organization in the United States and the most populous member of the United States Soccer Federation, the governing body for soccer in the United States. The Washington Youth Soccer is the sixth largest membership in the nation; our organization represents over 128,000 players (ages 4-19) and their families, 15,000 coaches on 11,000 teams and 6,500 referees in the state of Washington. Washington Youth Soccer's mission is to foster the physical, mental and emotional growth and development of the State of Washington's youth through the sport of soccer at all levels of age and competition.

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