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## A newer dilemma

Posted by rziegler - 2008/03/26 22:59

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OF course not too long ago this was no issue at all. There was no pro league in the U.S. and the handful of players who did play professionally, usually in lower divisions overseas, went after college, with no thought of it before.

Now people are more aware of the international norm, and inroads have been made to showing European teams that American players can be a great asset.

But it's a big decision. What are some of the factors that players and families go through in making up their minds?

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## Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by sburleigh - 2008/03/27 00:18

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I think one factor has got to be, "What if it doesn't pan out as planned, then what?" Soccer is perhaps the only major sport left where playing in college is not required and post college is often viewed as "too late" by European standards. And skipping that college education, at least for many U.S. families is a big taboo should soccer or sports not work out.

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## Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by spencer@usfcsoccer.com - 2008/03/27 03:22

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Bottom Line: Education is important! Education is something you will have with you your whole life.

BUT...The reality of elite players pursuing a soccer career in the US and in Europe has become a reality. Europeans are welcoming Americans with open arms. Choosing to pursue a career at 18 is what needs to happen to America's top talents in order to see our nation as a whole continue to make strides in International Competition. The other aspect people often forget is that Europeans also have Universities. Online education is also possible. The soccer model throughout the world is that a player who turns 18 years old becomes a professional, not at the age of 22.

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## Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by dpackard - 2008/05/29 18:04

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Agreed...however, as in the last post, paying professional soccer at a younger age, especially in Europe is the only way to go. Aside from the MLS, other pro leagues are looking to sign players that are younger, players they can mold and shape into superstars. Case in point - three of the top players in the world right now - Ronaldo, Rooney, and Tevez - are all sub 24 years old and have been playing in in the top tiers of professional soccer their whole lives. Same goes for women - all our women play college soccer, while more and more women internationally are playing professionally - hence our fall from dominance in women's international soccer.

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## Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by diego - 2008/05/29 22:48

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Education is very important also. Doesn't one sacrifice their education if they turn pro too early? I am aware that there are universities in Europe and other countries where professional youth academies exist, but what if a professional career doesn't pan out? Are there programs that provide the tools and opportunities for such an experience - education and a chance to play professionally?

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## Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by lazer3 - 2008/06/02 14:12

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I think that playing professionally is a once in a lifetime opportunity. If you get the chance, you should take it. College and higher levels of learning are always available to those who wish to pursue them, and i see no problem with continuing ones education after their playing career is over. With the money they make playing, they could also pay for their college expenses.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by AZeda2 - 2008/06/02 14:47

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I agree with Lazer3!!!! i mean how many chances do you have to play pro!?!?!? i would for sure take the opportunity and see where it takes me, then worry about my education later.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by mbman - 2008/06/02 15:10

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It seems everyone is agreeing!!!! i mean who wouldnt take the opportunity to play pro come on!!!!

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by BFUDGE - 2008/06/02 15:52

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I dunno i would think thats a great chance to play pro and all, but you hear about the NFL or MLB guys who get hurt and have NOTHING and have to start from scratch with a career. Its a big gamble with your future so its a TOUGHHHHHHH decision...

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by Pattyoohsee5 - 2008/06/02 16:14

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My pops played professionally in Europe for 14 years and he seems to be fine hahaha i do think education is important, so a player should definitely get it if not before he starts playing football professionally, then after.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by ThEeKiNg7 - 2008/06/02 16:27

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Yo man fo real! If i had a shot to take it to the big time id be all ova it!!!! you can always get dat education after, last time i checked, there wasnt an age limit to college...

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by heyitsdrew - 2008/06/02 16:41

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I would also want to go pro, but not before CAREFULLY weighing out my options...

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by ZMzMZM - 2008/06/02 16:51

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As a parent of a soccer player myself, i would want FIRST AND FOREMOST to have an education. I mean, what would happen to their career if they got injured and couldn't play anymore! What is someone who has done nothing but play soccer their entire life going to do out in the workforce? Tough decision i have to say though

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by SMclaughlin33 - 2008/06/04 11:54

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These are all good points, but its VERY diferent for women, i mean there really arent any professional level leagues in the US, so it really makes no difference for most women players unless they have a chance to go overseas.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by Soccerstar54 - 2008/06/04 12:18

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I dont thin that this is too much of an issue, because there really ARENT that many players who go into the MLS right out of high school, and if they do its a very small number. Most players who feel that they have a shot go to college for a couple of years, fine tune thier game, and then go pro from there.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by ABSoccer23 - 2008/06/09 14:00

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agreed. the majority of players at least in the US get at least 2 years of a college education before they even have a chance at pursuing a college career. does anyone know of any players that have gone straight out f high school? i cant really htink of any

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by mbman - 2008/06/25 12:26

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No thats the problem with US Soccer. To get players into europe, they have to go DURING high school or right after to get into the youth programs and work their way up. This would, however, mean not going to college, but it makes it easier for players to become top elite player sin europe

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by CC7@aol.com - 2008/07/02 14:47

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Definitely agree!!!! This is the reason there are VERY limited American players in europe that are of high profile. Besides clint dempsey tim howard etc (about 6 or 7 players) there really arent any big time american players over there. Players who want to make it big in europe need to understand that they have to start when they are much younger and try and get over there.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by Soccerstar54 - 2008/07/02 15:24

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This is all very accurate, but it would be very difficult for american parents, given their values etc to send their kids over to europe at such a young age and not get any of the normal education that they would recieve here in the US. Although it

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would be good for US soccer players, i think its a bit of a stretch for parents

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by spurs1960 - 2008/07/03 21:00

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It's great to have a dream, but for every Rooney, Ronaldo, or Tevez there are a tremendous number of players who play out their careers in the lower leagues. They are scattered all throughout Europe. Only the players at the very top level make a true career out of the game. Realize that for the vast majority of these kids, soccer is the only way out, as compared to here in the U.S. where the sport has firmly entrenched itself into the middle class.

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### Re:A newer dilemma

Posted by Soccerstar54 - 2008/07/14 15:52

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This is true. But there are always good players, if not some of the best players coming out of these systems.

New Question though:

Would it benefit a player more to go to college, or play in the MLS? (given the salary, experience etc...)