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Haute école de gestion
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How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of different football academies in Europe?

**Bachelor Project submitted for the obtention of the
Bachelor of Science HES in International Business Management**

by

Caroline MULHAUSER

Bachelor Project Advisor:
Kurt STERCHI, Lecturer

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International Business Management

Declaration

This Bachelor Project is submitted as part of the final examination requirements of the Haute école de gestion de Genève, for the Bachelor of Science HES-SO in International Business Management.

The student accepts the terms of the confidentiality agreement if one has been signed. The use of any conclusions or recommendations made in the Bachelor Project, with no prejudice to their value, engages neither the responsibility of the author, nor the adviser to the Bachelor Project, nor the jury members nor the HEG.

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Geneva, May 31st 2016

Caroline MULHAUSER

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Executive Summary

Today, in Geneva (and in Switzerland), practicing a sport at a professional level, and continuing the studies, is something difficult to combine. Not all the young athletes, playing in an Elite Team, have the possibility to follow an adaptable sport-study program.

The main problem that the sport-study is currently encountering is a question of budget. That's why only the young athletes with a “*Swiss Olympic Talent Card*” can accede to the post-mandatory school in the sport study program. However it is interesting to see that in Geneva (during the year 2012-2013), 732 young athletes had a Swiss Olympic Talent Card. Out of these 732 young people, 79 are enrolled in a secondary school in the sport study program, and 77 in the post-mandatory, which represent 21% of all the holders of the Swiss Olympic Talent Card. *What are the other 79% doing?*

In order to compare the different educational system within sport organization it is easier to take into account only one specific sport. In this thesis, football will be the benchmark. Football is the most popular and accessible sport. Even if Switzerland does not have the most followed Championship, the country is one of the best in terms of promoting new generations of players and has a high potential of young talents. Between 28% and 36% of the players in the Swiss Championships (Super League and Challenge League) are under 21 years old. These numbers demonstrate the quality of the football development in Switzerland. However too many young players are quitting school because of a lack of measures that would enable them to combine their sport with their studies.

The question this thesis will try to answer is how to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports in order to enable the young athletes to combine their passion, and their future reconversion.

This thesis will concentrate on three football academies in Europe: Crystal Palace FC in England, The Olympique Lyonnais in France, and Servette FC in Switzerland. The goal is to analyse what and how things are done abroad, and to give recommendations to improve the current measures in Geneva.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Place of sport in the globalized world

Today, in our globalized world, sport is not only perceived as leisure time but also as means of social and economic development by improving the health and the personal development of people, especially the youngest ones. Activities that are linked to sport can also create jobs and produce economic activity at different levels.

In a world where different civilizations and cultures are melted, sport can also help to create a culture of peace and tolerance by gathering people on a common field, going beyond the national frontiers and promote friendship, understanding and mutual respect.

The fundamental principles of sport, the respect of the opponent and the rules, teamwork and sportsmanship are in compliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter (United Nations).

During the last decades, millions of dollars have being spent on the sport business thanks to important marketing strategies, sponsorships, TV rights and the purchase of players at a steep price.

Today, the biggest athletes in the world are promoting their sports, thanks to media coverage, marketing campaigns, and social media. Many young athletes are influenced by their example with the hope that one day they will be the new Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi or Roger Federer. Of course, not everybody has the same talent and the same technical and physical capacity, but the role of our society today, is to enable them to dream and help them to make their dreams become possible.

That's why it is very important to implement training centres, where professionals would surround these young athletes in order to have the best development possible.

1.2 Purpose of this Thesis

This bachelor thesis will mainly concentrate on Football Academies in Europe, by comparing three institutions from different countries, Switzerland, England, and France on different points; Structure, Infrastructures and Education.

The main goal of this research is to give a new impulse of the “sport-study” in Geneva and to promote the importance of Training Centres not only for the personal development of young talents but also for the socio-economic development of the Canton.

In Switzerland it is difficult to implement a sport-study mentality and to offer the possibility to be good at both. This mentality is not yet settled in our roots and values, even if there were some improvements in the past few years. However, if we compare Switzerland with North America (The US and Canada), where sports have a place in the centre of each high school and university and where athletes have the possibility to follow a correct education and to practice their sport and become professional, we can say that Europe and especially Switzerland has a long way to go.

In Geneva, for example, which is not only one of the main cities in Switzerland but which also has an international reputation because of the numerous international institutions located in the region, sports and sporting events are not seen as a priority.

However, there are many sports popular within the Canton: Ice Hockey, where the flagship team is one of the best in Switzerland, and the Academy of “Genève Futur Hockey” is becoming popular for its capacity to train young talents (The Novice Elite team of Geneva won their first Swiss Championship in April 2016). Servette Football Club, the popular club of the Canton of Geneva, is one of the oldest clubs in Switzerland and used to have an important role at a European level. However, these last few years the club went through different difficult situations not only on the financial level but also in the sport itself. But the Club continues to succeed in developing young talents (such as Lorenzo Gonzalez, 16 years old that has just signed a contract with Manchester City, Kevin Mbabu, 19 years old playing for Newcastle or Jeremy Guillemenot, 18 years old that will play next season with the U19 of FC Barcelona) and it is still one of the best academies in Switzerland. Finally Volleyball and Swimming are the two other sports with a great popularity in Geneva, and with the highest number of young athletes following a sport-study program.

In 2014, in the Canton of Geneva there were 60 places in the Secondary School (High school level) for young football athletes. Today, in 2016 there are only 35 places (out of 220) because of budget cuts.

1.3 Objectives of the Thesis

Because of the lack of support from the State and from certain schools (lack of adaptation), too many young players are quitting school at the age of 16 or 17 because it becomes too complicated to conciliate their professional career with the willingness of continuing their studies for their future professional conversion.

This study attempts to describe what is already in place, by analyzing what and how things are done in other countries, in order to find a win-win situation for the clubs, the athletes and the state.

1.4 Literature Review

It doesn't exist lots of theoretical literatures on my subject, since it is mainly based on existing reports and other information I gathered during my interviews with different clubs and people involved in the sport-study.

Michel Pont wrote a complete report in March 2012, "Concept Cantonal de Formation de la Relève du Football Genevois". This report compares the existing structures in Switzerland and explains the position of the Servette FC. This research will be a starting point in my comprehension of the subject.

Moreover, I will also use the "Swiss Football Study", made during the season 2009-10/2014-15. The data will give me important information about the evolution of young football players in Swiss clubs, and the proportion of young athletes playing in the different European leagues.

I will then use the "Report on Youth Academies in Europe", that compare 10 clubs of different European Championships (FC Barcelona, Arsenal FC etc..), their academies and the educational system in place. I will then be able to analyse what is done in big and famous football clubs in Europe and how I can deduct conclusions.

Finally, I will analyse the study made on the Sport-Art-Etude measures in Geneva, in order to better understand the current situation and to see where improvements have to be done.

2. Football as a Benchmark

In order to compare the different educational system within sport organization it is easier to take into account only one specific sport. In this thesis, football will be the benchmark.

Why football? Football is the most popular sport in the world. From South America, to Europe and Asia billions of people are either watching or playing football¹. During the World Cup 2010 in South Africa, more than 3.2 billion people watched on TV at least one minute of this international event. The numbers of the World Cup 2014 are not yet available, but some preliminary analysis expects it to be higher. This means that one out of two people in the world has watched the World Cup

This sport is accessible everywhere and there are only little needs in terms of equipments and costs; sport cloths, a pair of shoes, shin pads and eventually a raincoat. The cost related to this activity are relatively low: From CHF 200.- to CHF 500.-, depending on the brand of the clothes.

Moreover, in primary school or even before, football is one of the first game children are playing together in the playground. Football, as many other sports, is a way to inculcate people with different values such as the respect of the opponent, discipline and sharing.

Many young people hope to be the idol of tomorrow. Only few would succeed. That's why it is important to implement educational projects in academies in order to prepare correctly the future of the young athletes.

2.1 Football in Europe

2.1.1 Place of the Swiss Football Championship in Europe

Within Europe, Switzerland is one of the healthiest countries economically speaking. However, as it comes to sports and especially in the football field, our country can be seen as "the little chick". The Swiss football Championship does not have the same financial means than the Big-5 club in Europe: France, England, Germany, Spain and Italy. That's one of the reasons it's difficult to compare the Swiss Championship with the other ones since the financial investment within clubs is lower.

¹ Appendix 4: *Map of the Most Popular Sports in the World*

Nevertheless, where it is interesting to analyze the differences between the Swiss Championship with the one of the Big-5 is in their capacity to train young professional players and to analyze which foreign clubs would be interested to sign these futures talents.

It is difficult for a Swiss club (except Basel FC, or Young Boys FC) to compete against immense European clubs such as Arsenal in England, Paris in France, or Barcelona in Spain. That's why, the Swiss championship is recognized for its quality of training.

It is interesting to analyze the evolution of the number of Swiss players in other Championships. Despite its relatively small size, Switzerland placed number 6 during the season 2012-2013 with the most players playing in foreign Championship.

Table 1, Expatriates' origins in the Big-5, 1st Semester 2012-13

Number of players, Top 20		Number compared to population*	
1. Brazil	120	1. Uruguay	9.17
2. Argentina	98	2. Switzerland	4.25
3. France	91	3. Serbia	4.08
4. Spain	37	4. Denmark	3.40
5. The Netherlands	36	5. Portugal	3.22
6. Switzerland	34	6. Argentina	2.40
7. Portugal	34	7. Belgium	2.16
8. Uruguay	31	8. The Netherlands	2.15
9. Serbia	29	9. Czech Republic	2.10
10. Belgium	24	10. Austria	2.00

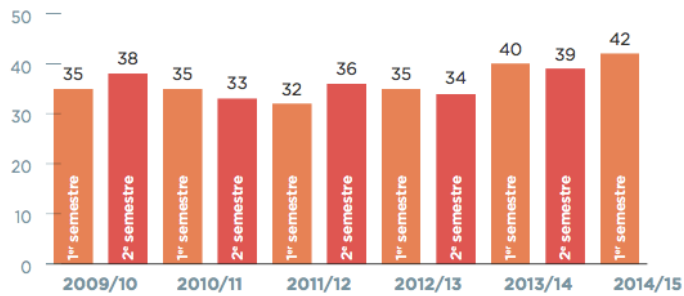
Source: Schäfer, Poli (2013, p. 11)

Moreover this table shows us that only Uruguay has a larger density of players in the Big-5 (per million of inhabitants) and if Switzerland had the same population as Brazil, there would approximately be 820 Swiss players in the Big-5 Europeans clubs.

During the season 2014-2015, we can see that the number above has increased: There were 42 Swiss players expatriated in one of the Big-5 Championships (such as the players listed above: Kevin Mbabu, Jeremy Guillemenot or Lorenzo Gonzalez next season), and Switzerland was the 4th country with the most expatriates. It is appealing to see that all the countries that were ahead of Switzerland, have all won at least one World Cup.

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Table 2, Evolution of the number of Swiss expatriates in the Big-5 since 2009-2010



Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 6)

Table 3, country of origin of the Expatriate playing in the Big-5

	2013/14 ²	2014/15 ²	Evolution
1. (2.) France	110	118	+8
2. (3.) Argentine	101	113	+12
3. (1.) Brésil	118	112	-6
4. (4.) Espagne	52	59	+7
5. (5.) Suisse	40	42	+2
6. (9.) Belgique	31	41	+10
7. (11.) Serbie	28	39	+11
. (7.) Portugal	35	39	+4
. (6.) Pays-Bas	36	39	+3
10. (7.) Uruguay	35	26	-9

Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 6)

These figures demonstrate that even with the “poor” financial means of the Swiss clubs, Switzerland still has an important place in the European Championship and is able to provide, high-quality and well-trained players.

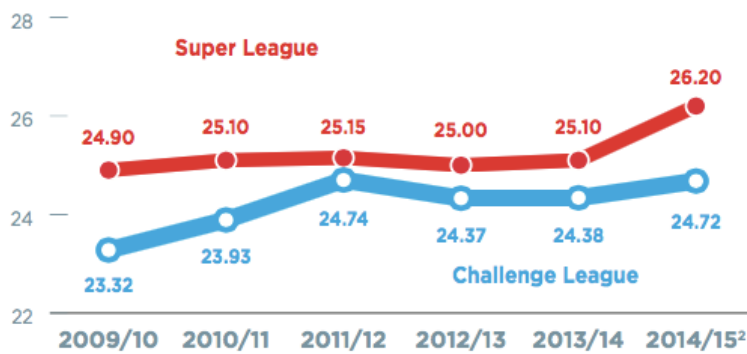
2.1.2 Analysis of Training in Europe and in the Swiss Championship

With the analysis made above, the goal was to demonstrate that the Swiss Championship is able to deliver quality players.

In the two main divisions of the Swiss Championships, the Super League and the Challenge league, the mean age of each team is between 24 and 26 years old. This number has lightly increased these last few years, as we can see in the table below

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Table 4, Mean age evolution of the players, playing in Super League and Challenge League

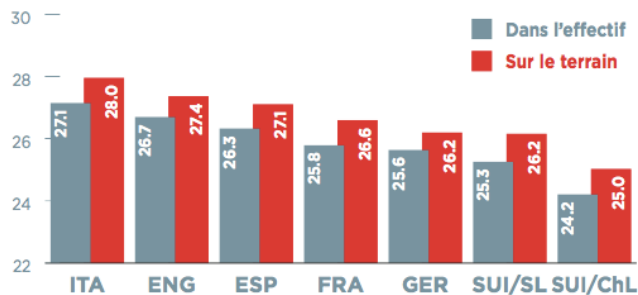


Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 4)

However, even if these numbers have a tendency to increase, in comparison with the Big-5 clubs, the Swiss Championship is the one that aligns the youngest players while the Italian and the English Championship align “oldest” players.

These figures demonstrate signs, not only of confidence regarding the training centre of the country but also of quality and professionalism of such centre.

Table 5, Mean age per season and per team (2009/10-2014/15)



Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 13)

Having lots of young players in a team is good. But making them play is better. If a club has 50% of players under 21 years old, but aligns them only for 5% of the playing time, what's the goal? That's why it is also interesting to see the playing time of each age category, in each of the European division.

Table 6, Mean distribution of players per age category

	U21	22-26	27-31	32+	Total
Premier League	16%	37%	36%	11%	100%
La Liga	18%	41%	32%	10%	100%
Ligue 1	23%	39%	28%	10%	100%
Bundesliga	22%	43%	27%	8%	100%
Serie A	15%	34%	35%	16%	100%
Super League	28%	39%	26%	7%	100%
Challenge League	36%	40%	20%	4%	100%

Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 13)

This table demonstrates (again) that the two main divisions of the Swiss Championship have confidence in their young players. In the Super League there are 28% of players under the age of 21, while in the Challenge league (2nd division) this number is higher with 36%, while in the Premier League (England) or Serie A (Italy) the U21 represents “only” 15% of the total team.

Table 7, Mean distribution of playing time per age category

	U21	22-26	27-31	32+	Total
Premier League	7%	41%	40%	12%	100%
La Liga	10%	42%	38%	11%	100%
Ligue 1	14%	42%	33%	10%	100%
Bundesliga	15%	46%	31%	8%	100%
Serie A	8%	35%	40%	17%	100%
Super League	18%	41%	33%	8%	100%
Challenge League	26%	45%	24%	5%	100%

Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 13)

In this table, we can see that the young players, in the two Swiss Championships are not there to play “secondary roles”. Even if their playing time does not represent one third of the total, in comparison with the other European Championships, their presence is not only important for the well-being of the team but also for their own development. Playing in professional championship(s), for the “under 21 teams”, provides them another level of experience and enables them to progress in different sectors of the game, something that could not be possible in a junior Championship.

In Switzerland there is a high potential of new talent, as all the figures above have demonstrated. Nevertheless it is important to be aware of that they won’t all turn into professional players in the long term. That’s why it is primordial for the Country, the

Cantons and the Clubs to set up educational programs that would enable them to follow their dreams as much as possible without damaging their future careers.

2.2 Swiss Football Association

Football is one of the most popular sports in the Country. The association considers the three first divisions - Raiffeisen Super league, Brack Challenge League and Promotion League - as professional. One third of the U21 teams (4) are playing in the third division (Promotion League), which prepares them to play more easily in an upper level, with real and experienced professional players.

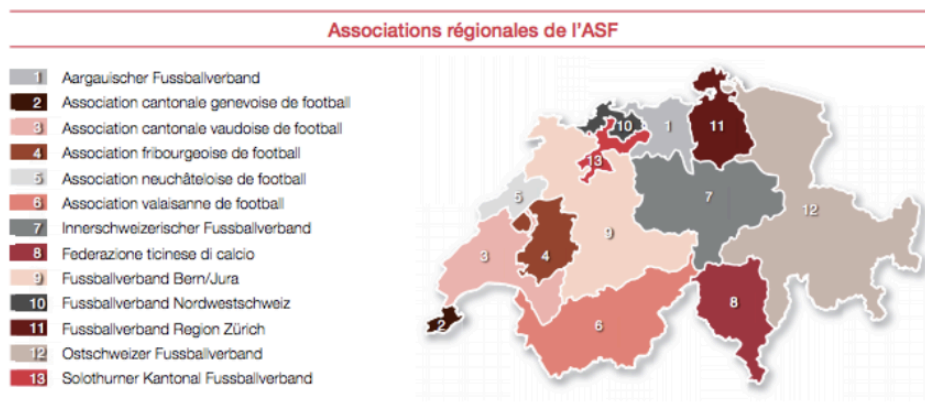
2.2.1 Structure of the Swiss Football Association (FooTeCo)

The junior football **elite** structure in Switzerland is divided into five categories. This division enables clubs of each region to make a tight selection of the more talented players from the age of 14 to the age of 21 and offers them different adaptable measures such as the sport-study (Qu'est-ce que FooTeCo, ASF, 2014)

1. U14: 58 teams
2. U15: 41 teams
3. U16: 25 teams
4. U18: 23 teams (14 teams U18 and 9 teams U17)
5. U21: 13 teams – From the Promotion League to the Second League (Interregional)

In Switzerland, the Swiss Association of football (ASF) defined a training policy in the form of a partnership divided into geographical regions (13 regions), called FooTeCo (Football Technic and Coordination). The main objectives of this structure is to develop the potential of each player, it filters potential talents at the level of the preformation (FE-12 to FE-14) and enables them to reach the elite football in a U15 team.

Table 8, Regional Association of the ASF



Source: Association Suisse de Football, (2014, p.17)

In order to better understand this concept, it is important to know how the Geneva Partnership² works (Association Cantonale Genevoise de Football).

The Geneva Partnership's mission is to organize and to set up the training structure. Servette FC has a partnership with Etoile Carouge FC and Meyrin FC beginning from **the U14 until the U21**. (Project FooTeCo)

In Geneva there are four so-called elite clubs. Etoile Carouge FC, Meyrin FC, Servette FC and ACGF (Association Cantonale Genevoise de Football) that possess a unit FooTeCo. Servette has eight partner clubs within the framework of this project: Avanchets, Vernier, City, Olympic of Geneva, Laconnex, Interstar, Signal-Bernex and the Italian CS. These clubs announce to the Servette FC which of their young players have the biggest potential. At the End of May, the trainers make a census of approximately 40 players, that they will have to reduce to 18 young people having a certain potential according to the criteria "PISTE" of the ASF.

Meyrin, Carouge and the ACGF do exactly the same thing within their geographical zones.

Then, this group of 18 players trains at Balexert (for the Servette group) once a week during the entire season, every Wednesday. This group is the team, which is called "Cellule FE12-13or 14, depending on their age category, of Servette FC". It means that they have an additional training in comparison with the other players of their club and they are surrounded with other excellent players that urge them to add an additional stage in their sports program. From 11 to 14 years, these players follow the FooTeCo

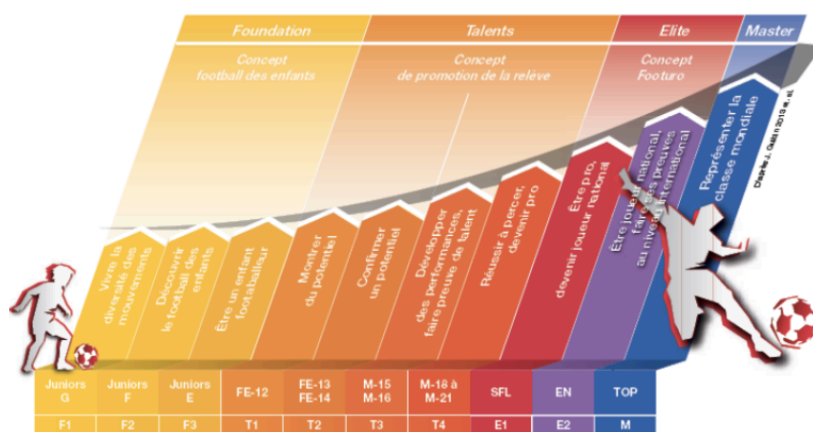
² Appendix 2: Interview with Mr. Thierry Cotting, Academy Director of Servette FC

curriculum so that the club can observe them during a longer period. At the end of the FE14 either they integrate the U15 of Servette, Etoile-Carouge or FC Meyrin, or they return to their original club. For the self-fulfilment of the children, it is the best solution.

To summarize, all the young players from U12 to U14 are playing in their local club. The best ones are selected in one of the four main clubs of the Canton in function of their localisation. Then a FE-12, 13, 14 is formed, and the players of each of these teams have an additional practice during the week. At the end of the year, the best players of these teams are selected to integrate the U13, U14 or U15 of one of the big four clubs of the Region.

The structure of the Swiss Football is in a Pyramid form, in order to bring the best players possible at the top.

Table 9, Athletes development in the promotion of a new generation of players in the ASF³



Source: Knäbel, (2014, p.6)

2.2.2 The Training Label

The training label is in Switzerland a “standard” that “trainer clubs” have to follow in order to be categorized by the Swiss Football Association.

This label has requirements not only in terms of infrastructures but also in terms of the supervising staff such as the number of professional coaches, technical directors, and

³ Appendix 5, *Athletes development in the promotion of a new generation of players in the ASF*

talent managers, etc. that clubs have to implement in order to obtain subventions from the SFA.

The main objective of this label is to prepare players that later will be able to play at a national and international level, and to stay competitive on an international level. In order to do that, it is essential to:

- Improve the pre-training (M-15 teams)
- Improve the training and the post-training (M-16 to M-21)
- Improve the technical, athletic, and mental ability of each player

Each person in the supervising staff will have to follow an important bill of specification in order to meet the different technical requirements of the Swiss Football Association

This training label does not impose strict rules or standards in terms of the educational system. Each club has to organize the sport-study with its Canton. This is a point that can be improved by imposing requirements in terms of education.

3. Clubs' academies Analyzed

In order to be able to make a comparative study of the Football Academy in Europe and the youth development within clubs mainly on the educative project and system within each of them, I have chosen to work on three training centres from three different countries. This practical approach was not only beneficial to bring added value to my bachelor thesis, but also for my personal knowledge on Sport Management.

I have visited the academies of Crystal Palace, which first team is playing in the Premier League of the English Championship, The Olympique Lyonnais in France and of course Servette FC.

3.1 Analysis of Servette FC

Servette Football Club is one of the most popular football clubs in Switzerland. It was created in 1890 and enjoyed many successes: 17 Swiss Championships, and 7 Swiss Cups. These results made it the second most titled club of Switzerland behind GC (Grasshopper).

However the club has gone through difficult financial situations during the last decade. In 2005 a first bankruptcy was pronounced and the club was relegated to an amateur league. The second team of Servette, the U21 that was playing in the promotion league (third Division of the Swiss Championship) became the "first team" of Servette. A year after, in 2006 the team was promoted in the second division of the Swiss Championship. In 2011, they reached the first division again. However, in 2013, the club underwent another relegation to the second division. Last year, in 2015, after a critical financial situation, the Swiss Football Association took the decision to relegate Servette in the third division since they did not achieve the financial requirements for the second division.

With the help of private investors and Didier Fischer who became President, the Foundation 1890 was created, and it is now the Foundation 1890 who is in charge of the Servette FC 1890 S.A.

Today, May 2016, the club has been promoted again in the second division, with the objective, within two to three years, to be back on the top.

During these difficult periods that the Servette FC went through, one thing remained well: The **Academy!** In March 2015, while the Elite team was going through another

financial crash, the academy was the one that had the best talents. Seven juniors from Servette appeared among the various Swiss selections of U15 to U21 (MONNARD, 2015).

Last Year, the U17 won the Swiss Championship and was qualified for the UEFA Youth league. This season (2015-2016), the U15 won the Nike Cup (National Championship) for the first time since 2003⁴.

There is a high potential and lots of talents in the Academy of Servette FC. With the numerous successes on the field, and the implementation of something new, the Academy could help to boost the image of the club.

3.1.1 Actual Structure of the Club and the Academy (Legal, Financial, Professional)

Servette Football Club 1890 SA is a foundation with a Foundation Board, which takes care of managing the Incorporated Company (The Foundation Board, so-called Foundation 1890, was created in June 2015). Inside this council there is the Incorporated Company in which the U21 team is included (because semi-professional) and the Association (Academy).

It is also important to note that there are two operating budgets: One for the Association and the other one for the Incorporated Company.

The operating budget for the season 2015-2016 of the Incorporated Company was around 2.7 million CHF while the one for the Association was around 1.5 – 2 million CHF.

The Academy of the Servette FC, as explained in **chapter 2.2.1**, has a partnership with three other clubs in the Geneva region, in order to have the Label 1 for the training.

In the canton of Geneva, there are 65 clubs, where 42 are training clubs (from the age of 5 to the age of 12). It is important to understand the structure as a "pyramid" of the football in Geneva and thus the training, which is offered to the young players. (Structure in place since 2012)⁵:

⁴ Appendix 2: *Interview with Mr. Thierry COTTING.*

⁵ Appendix 6: Pyramid of the training of the football in Geneva

1. The **Apprenticeship**, which includes: Feminine football, players from 5 to 13 years (in 65 different clubs) and the regional selection (U12 and U13)

2. The **Pre-training** includes: (In the four clubs of the Partnership)

- U13-14: preparation for the elite (There are four teams of each group for a total 8 teams)
- U15: from these four teams above, three teams are created. The best players go to the Servette FC team in U15, the second group with Etoile Carouge and the third group with Meyrin FC
- U16: from the three teams above, two teams of U16 are created. The best players integrate Servette in the U16a, and the others go with Etoile Carouge in U16b

The U15 and the U16 are considered as “elite team” since they are playing in the Swiss Championship.

3. **Training:**

- U17-U21: from this stage, there is only a single team of each category that are trained with Etoile Carouge (U17) while the U18 and the U21 are with Servette FC.

4. **Professional Team:** Servette Football Club and Etoile Carouge are playing both in the same Championship (season 2015-2016). Servette FC is about to be promoted in the second division while Etoile Carouge may be relegated in the fourth. (Official on may 28th 2016).

3.1.2 Infrastructures

Servette FC’s training sector has at its disposal the Balexert Sport Centre for *its training and its games*. It is also the headquarter of the team since 2005. This place, which is State-owned, has a total surface of 40’000m² and includes:

- Two grass field
- One synthetic field (accredited until the 3rd division)
- One synthetic field, which is no more practicable

- Locker rooms

There is also a small restaurant called “*Le Grenat*”. However there are neither bleachers nor specific or converted places around the field to seat and watch the games.

This sport centre generates high costs for the club. The annual maintenance work has a mean cost of CHF 281'237 per year (from 2011, until now) (MARIANI, 2015). It is important to note that other Swiss clubs such as FC Sion, Lausanne Sport or even Neuchâtel Xamas do not have to pay for the use of the installations that the Canton put at their disposal.

3.1.3 Education

The educational system of young athlete playing for the Servette FC is not optimal in terms of efficacy, but lots of efforts are being made not only by the club itself with Mr. Stéphane Mariller who is the “sport-study Manager” but also with the Department de l’Instruction Public with Mrs Ava Monnet as the coordinator.

The educational system in Switzerland is divided into three parts:

1. Primary School: From 4 to 12 years old
2. Secondary School: From 12-15 years old
3. Post-Mandatory: 15-19 years old

The two first parts are “mandatory”. But at the end of this cycle the young adult has to choose which pathway he wants to follow for his future

In the secondary school of Geneva, it exists special “sport-study” classes for all young athletes. Their schedules are a little bit adapted and lighter in terms of courses. A few years ago, the academy of the Servette FC set up during the Secondary School (Cycle d’Orientation), a gathering of the players in the same establishment.

(The U14 and the U15 of Servette were together in the same school (C.O Cayla), and the same uniting of the U14 and U15 of Carouge was done in C.O Pinchat.).

These young people have two tutoring periods (études surveillées) per week as well as two training sessions between 11:30 am and 1:30 pm so that they can be back home earlier in the evening.

Generally, those players have a “Region Talent Card”, which gives them access to this kind of organization. The validity of this card is limited to one year. Every year, the player is evaluated (in his/her sport) to see if he/she is still considered as a “Talent” (Association Suisse de Football, 2013, p8).

The Swiss Olympic Talents Card is defined as follow:

“The Swiss Olympic Talents Card (National or Regional) is an acknowledgement of the actual performance, and the future potential of a young athlete, who has been selected in a “leading” team of a regional or national association”

(Association Suisse de Football, 2013, p.8)

There is also an important educational follow-up. Every day, two trainers are going to eat with the young players at their school and they are also accompanying them during the study tutoring periods.

At the end of the secondary school, not all the young athletes will be able to continue their studies with an adaptable schedule. A point of fact is that only the ones who have the “Swiss Olympic Talent Cards” will have access to a sport-study program in the Post-Mandatory School.

The Post-Mandatory School, on the other hand, is not always optimal in terms of organization for young professional athletes. Because of the complexity and the big amount of different classes (approximately 50), in three different curriculums (High School, Business School, ECG) it is complicated to implement such gathering of players; but not impossible. This year (2015-2016), there were a limited number of places for such a structure. For example, there were only 35 places for football players within the entire Canton, all categories included (U15-U18). Players are put in one class, with one or two other athletes. The teachers are aware of the situation, and generally do their best to help them when they have to miss one or several classes because of practices or national selection.

It is also important to understand that seven players of the U16 of Servette FC are selected with the Swiss national team, which corresponds to approximately two and a half months out of school. That’s why it is very important to have a good organization and understanding between the player, the school and the club.

3.1.4 What has to be improved?

The Academy of the Servette FC is one of the most successful of Switzerland. However some improvements have to be made on several aspects.

Firstly, the poor and inadequate infrastructures available for the club and the Academy have to be updated. Undeniably, two out of four fields would not respond anymore to the standard of the UEFA. Moreover there are no specific bleachers for spectators when they come to watch the games of the Academy and the locker rooms deteriorate slowly, but surely. A project of a new training centre does exist, with the construction of three new fields (in the first phase), locker rooms, fitness room, medical care centre. However, with the opposition of different parties involved, this project does not have a chance to be born before years.

Secondly, in terms of education, the club has little power to improve the current system. On the other hand, the Swiss Football Association should enforce, within the training label they credit to the clubs, an educational project that the different partnerships should put in place, in order to be better involved in the school education of their young players.

3.2 Crystal Palace U.K

Crystal Palace FC was created in 1905, in the surroundings of London. The club had mitigated results since its creation. Its best years were during the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s where it participates to its first FA Cup finale.

During the years 2000, the club went through many ups and downs, and was relegated to the Championship division (Second division in England).

The club succeeded to re-attain the Premier League division in 2013. Since then, the results are not spectacular, and Crystal Palace place is rather in the middle of the rankings than on the top.

Crystal Palace is still considered as a “rookie”, since the club has been playing in the “modern” Premier League for only three seasons. The financial means at disposal are relatively low in comparison with other big clubs in London, such as Arsenal or Chelsea. However, their perspective of progression is wide.

3.2.1 Actual Structure of the Club and the Academy (Legal, Financial, Professional)

The Academy of Crystal Palace is an entire part of the club. Hierarchically speaking it is below the first team, and it provides players for the management to select.

The total budget of Crystal Palace is around 100 million £. The budget allocated for the academy is around 1.2 million £, which represents approximately 1% of the total budget.

In the Premier League structure, there are different categories of Academies. Crystal Palace, Watford and Bournemouth are the three last clubs being in the Category 2. All the other academies of the Premier league are in Category 1. However it is important to take into account that Crystal Palace has been playing in the Premier league for only three years, (as explained above, the club has been promoted to the Premier League in 2013). That's why it takes time to enforce quality programs, and improvements are made one step at a time.

Clubs from the Category 1 receive a 750'000 £ grant (by the league) while the ones in Category 2 receive 480'000 £.

In order to be "upgraded" or even to stay in a certain category, different criteria standards exist on facilities, staffing, training programs (such as coaching methodologies, schooling etc.).

The club has no regional partnerships (such as the ones of Servette FC), with whom they can collaborate. They have 5 regional scouts in London with their own teams (about 40 scouts in London) and their mission is to go and watch players from other clubs within London and to find players with interesting potential. However, in the English Championship it is not legal to appoint foreign players until the age of 16. That's why the recruitment process is mainly done at a regional level.

Today the academy of Crystal Palace has about 230 players, divided up from U7 to U21.

3.2.2 Infrastructure

The infrastructures of Crystal Palace are quite poor. The training centre included three grass fields, physical therapists rooms, a fitness room and a cafeteria for the players.

The infrastructures at the disposal of the club are the big weak points and are one of the reasons the club is in Category 2 in terms of Academy.

The club is projecting to invest £100 million into a new training centre that both the Academy and the elite team would use.

3.2.3 Education

The education system in England is divided into four different stages that are based upon the age:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage (3 to 5 years old),
- The primary school (5 to 11 years old),
- The secondary school (11-18 year old) and
- The tertiary education, which is generally a university level (18+).

As in Switzerland, the full-time education is mandatory from the age of five to the age of sixteen. However, more traditionally speaking, parents have the possibility to offer an independent schooling to their children such as Home schooling. The idea is that they can choose the way they want to educate their children with various means at their disposal.

The educational system within the academy of Crystal Palace offers the possibility to the young players to pursue their studies, while practicing their sport. Moreover, the Premier League has imposed strict rules concerning the implementation of educational system within each club. These standards concern different structures of the sport study, for the players that are full-time, part-time or hybrid. Each of these categorizes have a plan in order to provide an education to all the athletes of the club.

Here is what a typical training week looks like of the different categories of Crystal Palace:

- U16: 5-7 trainings per week and 1 game. They have school four times a week
- U18: Generally players from this category are at the academy from 8:30am to 3pm. They have not only trainings on the field, but also fitness or video sessions.

- U21: Same as the U18. They are present at the academy 8:30am to 3pm and have different training sessions, such as yoga, gym, and video analysis. They also have lunch together.

The players from the U13 to U16 go to the same school. Four mornings per week they have training from 8am to 9:30am. The club has a bus that brings them to school, which is not too far from the academy, at 10:00am. Every Tuesday and Thursday, the players are having lunch at the academy and have an afternoon practice. The players from U16 to U18 years generally have class one and half days a week. This system is very different from the other ones in Europe and that's why it is difficult to know exactly the equivalences in other countries. The players can receive a BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council). This diploma is from a secondary school leaving qualification to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Others can also receive a NVQ, which is a National Vocational Qualification.

These diplomas can enable some of them to obtain an American scholarship to study at a university in the US or in England (some universities may ask for complementary skills).

For the Academy of Crystal Palace, having all the players in one school makes it easier to manage and have direct contacts with everybody involved in the education (teachers, supervisors, etc.) of their young players. However all the players have to follow the same school curriculum, because it would be not only to expensive to offer different classes but also to complicated to manage different programs for each one.

During the year, meetings are organized with teachers and supervisors in order to have direct feedbacks on the performance of the young players. The club and the coaches take their responsibility when it comes to motivate their players to succeed by not allowing them to practice if they are not making sufficient effort in school.

3.2.4 What has to be improved?

The main priority of the club is to be upgraded in the Category 1 for the academy. In order to achieve this, some efforts have to be made, and especially on the current infrastructures in place that are not sufficient.

In addition, a bigger budget should be allocated to the academy in order to offer greater means for the training of young athletes and to better compete with the other academies in the country. The level of the premier league is very high, but the

academy of Crystal Palace has only one player eligible for the first team (Premier League) every two to three years and more or less one player eligible to play in the Championship division (second division in England) every season.

3.2.5 Crystal Palace and Arsenal FC: What makes them so different?

Arsenal FC is one of the most popular clubs not only in England but also in Europe. Arsenal FC has been playing in the Premier league for years and has won 13 times the English Championship, which makes it the third most titled club of England.

The Academy of Arsenal has been created in 1954. Today, it is one of the best ones worldwide. The training of young players is in the mission/philosophy and the core values of the club. Many of the coaches have once played for Arsenal FC.

The club has two training centres: One for the age group from 8 to 16 years old, with seven fields and another for all the players over 16 years old and up to the first team. The training centre for the second age group has "state of the art" infrastructures; three pitches with under-soil heating, a building with a swimming pool, a number of locker rooms, a fitness rooms, a restaurant and several conference rooms.

The second age group is the one with top-quality players, especially from the U19 where the club has big expectations. Moreover, Arsène Wenger himself, the coach of the first team, trains players from the U20 and the U21, during International breaks.

The **educational system** within the Academy is well implemented and offers to the young athletes the possibility to continue their studies normally. Up to 16 years old, all the players can follow the normal school curriculum. Their training centre is not far from the centre of London, which allows them to get there easily.

From the age of 16, there is a special school program that has been created together with the club and the Government in order to offer (to the players), the possibility to obtain a two A Levels (pre-university). This program mainly focuses on English and life skills (finance, media, social media, social behaviour).

These subjects are closely related to sports. The idea is to enable the young players to have a proper education and to pursue another career if they don't become professional football players (FONTEIN, al, 2012, p.30).

The main differences between these two clubs, playing in the same division, but with different financial terms, are firstly the means each club is investing in their training

centre (Academy). Crystal Palace has 1.5 million € budget while Arsenal as more than 3 million €. Secondly, Crystal Palace has been playing in the Premier League for only three years. Their main goal is to keep a certain stability within the first team, increase the budget and improve their infrastructure that are not at the same level as the one in Arsenal FC. Training young players is not yet a priority for the club, in comparison with Arsenal FC where they want to integrate as many young players as possible within the first team.

3.3 Olympique Lyonnais FR

The Olympique Lyonnais is quite a young club, if we compare it with Crystal Palace and Servette FC. It was created on August 3rd 1950 and evolved in the League 1 since 1989. However, since its creation, the club has won many titles; 7 French Championship consecutively, 5 French Cup and 1 League Cup. It has also attained twice the semi-finales of the UEFA Champion's league⁶.

The Olympic Lyonnais is one of the most stable clubs in Europe. Its President, Mr Jean-Michel Aulas, chairs the club since 1987. Moreover since 1995, it participates at least in one European Competition per year.

During the last decade, more than 40 players (47) who trained in the club have signed a professional contract with the Olympic Lyonnais. For the season 2012-2013, 12 out of 27 players came from the training centre of the club.

The club has been elected six times over the last decade as the best training club:

- The professional "reserve team" has won the French Championship 7 times
- The U19 won the Gambardella Cup 3 times,
- The U17 won the French championship 7 times

It is also important to note that the club has a popular women's team, which has won 9 times the French Championship in a row for a total of 13 and 7 French Cup titles. They have also won twice the UEFA Champion's League, in 2011 and 2012.

In France, most of the clubs have a training centre to be able to keep their best players. The problem is that a professional club cannot offer a contract to an « aspirant » or a

⁶ *Histoire de l'OL :Palmarès*, [Online], <http://www.olweb.fr/fr/club/histoire-de-lol-palmares-1-194.html>

« trainee » before the age of 16. That is why, without a training centre the club would lose most of the players.

3.3.1 Actual Structure of the Club and the Academy (Legal, Financial, Professional)

Since its creation, the Olympique Lyonnais is not only an association with an affiliation number at the French Football Federation (FFF), under the name “Olympique de Lyon et du Rhône” but also a company with a unique president. The company has the status of an Incorporated Company of Professional Sports (*Société Anonyme Sportive Professionnelle*). The OL Group is since February 8th 2007 listed at the stock exchange.

The Academy of the Olympique Lyonnais is considered as an association to the CFA (Championnat de France Amateur), which allows it to have subsidies and public contribution. However, it is also connected financially to the OL Group (the incorporated company). As an example, if it finds itself overdrawn, subsidies generally do not cover all, and the education, the educators, the licenses of the players are then directly linked to the budget of the group. The salary of the frame (educators, trainers) is paid under OL SASU (Simplified stock company to unique partner).

The club has a total budget of €170 million, which is the 3rd biggest of the Ligue 1, behind Paris SG and AS Monaco. The Academy’s budget, including the boys' and the girls' academies, represents approximately 7 to 8 millions (this budget takes into account contracts, travel, coaches, educators (tutors), accommodation etc). The budget allocated for the Academy represents more or less 5% of the total budget.

The club has to answer to different specifications in terms of structure. The approvals with the FFF (French Federation of Football) are made every 4 years but there is still a follow-up season by season.

The Academy of the Olympique Lyonnais has a wide regional and international network. It collaborates, within their region, with 4 clubs, categorized as “Réseau Sport Excellence” (RS) and with 15 clubs as “Réseau Sport”. This exchange and cooperation enable the club to⁷:

- Improve the image and the identity of the club in order to create a local and regional identity, and to share a game philosophy under the same functioning.

⁷ *Académie, Centre de Formation* [Online] <http://www.olweb.fr/fr/academie/centre-de-formation-218.html>

- Implement the Label RSE, developed by the OL to other regional clubs.
- Select and integrate the best players of the region with the Olympique Lyonnais.

Today the Academy of the Olympique Lyonnais has approximately⁸:

- 80 players under a training convention (U16 to U20 years)
- 60 players in pre-training (preformation) (U13 to U15 years)
- 80 awakening (éveil) (U7-U12)

The supervisory staff includes 40 to 50 people full-time. They also have school tutors with whom they have temporary work agreements, and other jobs under agreements such as physical trainers etc.

The academy of the Olympic Lyonnais has proved over the years its capability to train and to develop talents. Because of the high potential of its talents, lots of investments are made not only on the structure and the infrastructures of the academy but also in the educational system, which can make an important difference when integrating the club.

3.3.2 Infrastructures

Concerning the infrastructures, it is necessary for the club to answer certain requirements; in terms of numbers of fields, locker rooms, private study rooms, accommodation etc. From those specific requirements, The National Technical Direction is able to classify training centres into different categories: A, B or C. Of course the Academy of the OL is in Category A.

The main infrastructures of the club, such as the Training Centre, called “ Centre Tola Vologe” are located in Gerland, near the main stadium. This site regroups the training place for the Elite Team, but also the headquarters of the club and the Academy.

The site is composed of

- 8 fields (4 grass and 4 synthetic)
- Fitness centre

⁸ Appendix 1: *Interview with Mr. Stephane ROCHE, Academy Director of the OL*

- Medical area for physical therapy
- Class rooms, and bedrooms for players

In January 2016, the club inaugurated its new Stadium, “Stade Lumière”, totally financed and owned by the Olympic Lyonnais. After three years of construction and a cost of €405 million, the stadium has 58'000 places (3rd largest in France), and it will not only host all the game of the Olympic Lyonnais but also six games of the European championship 2016 in France (BOUTELET, 2016, p. 6-7). The Park OL (The new stadium) also includes a real business centre with a medical centre, a spare time centre, restaurants, and hotels.

The training centre will also move, in September 2016 to Meizieux, where a new training ground has been built. The club is in a phase of change, moving to the Park OL (the new stadium) as well the new academy to Meizieux. It also wants to set off again on something new. In Gerland, the amateurs (associations) and the pros were side by side. Now they are going to be separated. There will be 2km between the Park OL (Stadium) and the Academy in Meizieux. Thanks to the proximity the club used to have, it had created lots of connections and exchanges. This is something that they will have to try to keep up in the future.

3.3.3 Education

The Academy of the Olympic Lyonnais has a complete educational project. The young football player has to adhere to both the training and the **educational project**⁹.

The club tries to find adequate education programs for each of its athletes. The main objective is to find a balance between the professional development as a football player and to prepare him to his future reconversion.

The club has different partnerships with public establishments and tries to cooperate as much as possible in order to accompany the young player throughout his studies. On the other hand if the parents disengage (which often arrives) many do not succeed, the club tries then to put sport penalties so that they become aware of the importance of their studies.

⁹ Académie, *Centre de Formation*, [Online] <http://www.olweb.fr/fr/academie/centre-de-formation-218.html>

The young player has the possibility to follow various pathways, as any other student of the same age:

- CAP (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle)
- Bac Pro Commerce
- Bac Généraux (S, ES, STMG)

In the sports section, the Bac (High school) is completed normally in 3 years. The classes, which overlap the training schedule, are caught up by means of the remedial courses, within the academy (thanks to external tutors)¹⁰.

Here is what typical training week looks like in the different categories of the Olympic Lyonnais:

- U15-U16: 4-5 trainings per week and 1 game
- U16-U18: 5-6 trainings per week and 1 game
- U18-U20: 7-8 trainings per week and 1 game

The academy of Lyon has decided to pursue a Bac “training” over 3 years (instead of 4 previously) so that in the last two years of internship, players from U18 to U20) are totally released from their school obligations and can concentrate all their energy on their football training, since, as shown above, the intensity and the number of trainings is higher than in the categories below.

The players of the Olympic Lyonnais are mixed in the classes with other sportsmen/women (basketball players, handball players, hockey players etc.). It is important to note that all the players of the academy have access to the sport study program.

The club tries to encourage as much as possible all the young athletes during their studies but cannot force anyone to pursue a certain educational program. However, before they totally abandon, the academy can put sport-penalties (such as no practices or no games during a week) only to make them aware of the importance of the studies.

¹⁰ Appendix 7: Schedule of the U18 of the Olympique Lyonnais

3.3.4 What has to be improved?

The Olympique Lyonnais has one of the best academies in Europe. Every season, an average of six to eight players are integrated into the Elite team. Moreover, during the season 2014-2015, the playing time of the U21 players with the elite team represents almost 30% of the overall time.

Table 10, Teams that used the most U21 players, trained with their academy

BIG-5	Club (Ligue, Saison)	Joueurs	% minutes
	Borussia Dortmund (GER, 2009/10)	9	42.7%
	Stade Rennais FC (FRA, 2010/11)	9	33.4%
	AS Livorno (ITA, 2013/14)	8	32.1%
	OGC Nice (FRA, 2014/15)	9	30.5%
	1. FC Nürnberg (GER, 2010/11)	8	29.9%
	Toulouse FC (FRA, 2009/10)	9	29.7%
	Olympique Lyonnais (FRA, 2014/15)	7	29.3%

Source: Schäfer, Poli (2015, p. 16)

The educational system in Lyon is very well implemented and could be an example to follow. The infrastructures the clubs have, enables them to provide the players the maximum help possible.

4. Discussion

4.1 Servette FC, Crystal Palace and Olympique Lyonnais: Comparison

The analysis of the three different academies made above enables to make a comparison on the structure, the infrastructures and on the educational system each of these academies have.

4.1.1 Budget

It is interesting to analyse first how important an academy is for the club, within each organization.

As described in each section above, the budget allocated for each academy varies in function of the country and the league in which the training centre is implemented.

For the academy of Servette FC, the budget represents more than 40% of the total one of the organization. For the training centre of the Olympique Lyonnais, the budget represent 5% of the total one, and the one of Crystal Palace represents only 1%.

It is interesting to see that there is a positive correlation between the total budget allocated for each academy, and the number of young talent trained in these three different countries. As demonstrated in **Chapter 2**, the Swiss Championship enables lots of young player to play and to develop their skills in a professional championship, while in England (in the Premier League Championship) young players have fewer opportunities to play, during their training, in the professional league. However, in France, this ratio (5%) is a little bit misleading, especially for the Olympique Lyonnais, knowing that every year, six to eight players integrate the professional team. The mean sets up by the organization are well optimized. Moreover, in the Ligue 1 Championship in France, it is a high priority for a club to have an academy in order to keep its talent as already explained. That's why almost all the clubs of the Ligue 1 have a training centre.

4.1.2 Infrastructures

Another point, which is interesting to analyse, is the facilities available for each club. Except for the three clubs in the Category 2 in England (Crystal Palace, Watford and Bournemouth), all the academies have great and modern infrastructures, from the

fields to the building that includes fitness rooms, medical care rooms and some classrooms. The academy of the Olympic Lyonnais in France also has this type of great infrastructure. However it is not the case for the Academy and the Club itself of Servette FC. Knowing that this academy is one of the best in Switzerland, the poor infrastructure at their disposal is a shame. Two fields out of four are not responding anymore to the required standards, there are no specific places to sit to watch the games of the academy's teams, and the other infrastructures at their disposal such as offices, medical care rooms, locker rooms and fitness rooms are dilapidated.

There is an on-going project concerning a future training centre for the football in Geneva, more precisely at Pré-du Stand in Grand-Saconnex, near the airport. This new training centre would have in a first time, three new fields, an a new building that would welcome not only the management of the Servette FC but also new locker rooms, medical care rooms, fitness rooms and also small meeting rooms in order to have private tutors, coming to the centre for the young athletes.

4.1.3 Education

The way the education is implemented within each of these three organizations, vary from one country to another, since the educational systems are different. However, English and French academies give great importance to the intellectual education of their young athletes and their development within the society in order to offer them a balance with their sport life, and the life that is waiting for them after their career.

First of all, in England, in the Academy of Crystal Palace, the idea is to enable the young players to have the minimum level required to accede to a university with an American scholarship. At the age of 18, all the players are done with their studies and can totally concentrate on football.

Secondly, in France, in all the Academies, including the one of the Olympic Lyonnais, great means are invested for the education of young players. Almost all the academies have partnerships with public high schools, in which each player can follow the curriculum they want (CAP, BacPro & Bac Généraux). The players are mixed in special classes with other athletes and follow (more or less) the normal curriculum in three years. Few years ago, they could follow the program in four years. But the Academy of Lyon decided to follow the normal curriculum in order to enable the young players to be done with their studies at the age of 18 and then to give them the opportunity to be totally focused on football. When they have to miss classes because of games or

practices, private tutors are hired and come to the training centre, several times during the week, in order to enable them to catch up with the school program.

Finally, the academy of Servette doesn't have the same means at their disposal concerning the education of their young players. The organization in place for the secondary school (Cycle d'Orientation) is well implemented and organized. However things are becoming more complicated for the athletes when they want to accede to a sport-study program at the post-mandatory level. As explained in the **chapter 3.1.3**, the young players can only accede to this kind of service if they are holder of a "*Swiss Olympic Talent Card, Regional, National or Local*", because the number of places is restricted. Only the best players of each team are admitted in this specific program, where schedule is a little bit lightened and where they can be granted with additional vacations because of different competition or national team training.

To summarize, the current situation in Geneva regarding the sport-study program, taking as a benchmark the football Academy of Servette, is not the best it can be. Not all the athletes, coming from an elite club/ or team have the opportunity to follow an adapted post-mandatory program.

4.2 The Sport-Study Structure in Geneva

Today in Geneva, there are seven secondary schools (CO) and six post-mandatory schools (PO) that offer a sport-study program. In September 2013, Swiss Olympic recognized the sport-study measure in Geneva and attributed the *Swiss Olympic Partner School Label* to the SAE* (Sport-Art-Etude) establishments of the Canton of Geneva (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.10).

The budget allocated to each of these schools – Secondary and Post-Mandatory – is as follows¹¹:

- CHF 550'000 for the Secondary School, which includes, a SAE Dean in every partner establishment, coordination by a class master (a teacher in charge of the class only for the three establishments grouping individual sports), and support classes in every partner establishment.

¹¹ Interview with Ms. Ava MONNET, « Coordinatrice sport-art-étude », au Département de l'instruction publique, de la culture et du sport (DIP), Genève

- CHF 350'000 for the Post-Mandatory School, which includes, a SAE Dean in every partner establishment, coordination by a class master, tutors for students and specific schedule preparation.

Four out of seven secondary schools are specific to team sports. The idea is that the entire team of an elite club is grouped together in one establishment in order to facilitate the organization of the training schedule. The athletes are separated in normal classes, and have all the same schedule. That's the reason why the U14 and the U15 of Servette FC are grouped in the secondary school of Cayla, the ones of Etoile Carouge are in Pinchat, the U14-U15 of FC Meyrin are in la Golette and the elite teams of the Genève Servette Hockey Club are at the Aubépine.

This organization is working pretty well, even though they still have some problems for certain players of the hockey team regarding the training schedule and the school schedule.

The problem arises at the end of the mandatory school. In Geneva, the young student has to make a choice between four different curriculums: High School, Business School, ECG and an Apprenticeship. These different schools offer numerous possibilities and an important number of different classes (approximately 40).

A study has been made during the year 2012-2013 on the sport-study program in Geneva and its appreciation towards the student and his parents. Most of them are generally rather satisfied with what is in place (55%) (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.23), but some improvements are needed especially on the schedule, which is still quite heavy for the students in terms of organization and with the fatigue young athletes have to deal with daily. Indeed, especially for the team-sports in the post-mandatory school, 38% of the students agree that the arrangement in place enable them to pursue their study and their sport development without sacrificing one or the other but 27% rather disagree with this issue (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.28).

The main problem the sport-study is currently encountering is a question of budget. That's why only the young athletes with a "*Swiss Olympic Talent Card*" can accede to the post-mandatory school in the sport study program. However it is interesting to see that in Geneva (during the year 2012-2013), 732 young athletes had a Swiss Olympic Talent Card: 474 at a local level, 158 at a regional level and 100 at a national level (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.56). Out of these 732 young, 79 are enrolled in a secondary school in the sport study program, and 77 in the post-mandatory, which

represent 21% of all the holders of the Swiss Olympic Talent Card (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.60)

What are the other 79% doing? Are they following a normal curriculum?

In the study made on the sport-study program, different reasons were given. 28% of the holders of the talent card did not want to follow their classes in the establishments imposed by the SAE (Sport-Art-Etude) measures and 15% did not want to follow the curriculum offered. These problems are difficult to resolve since it concerns the personal tastes of each person (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.63)

However other reasons are improvable. For example, some of the athletes think that the arrangement in place is not sufficient (23%), others are simply not satisfied with what is offered (27%) and finally (20%) are quitting school since the post-mandatory – is not mandatory anymore (JAUNIN, BENNINGHOFF, 2014, p.63).

4.2.1 Optimizing the sport-study: What can be done?

The analysis of the three football academies, their structure and their educational project, gives an interesting international overview on how things are done abroad and might give ideas on *“how to optimize the sport-study at the high school level in Geneva for team sports”*

Some of the reasons why some athletes do not integrate a sport-study program are, as explained above, improvable. The idea is to give recommendation in order to give a new impulse to the sport-study in Geneva and to make it unique not only in the Suisse Romande, but also throughout the country.

4.2.1.1 Creation of a Specific Option “Sport” at the ECG

The ECG (Ecole de Culture Générale) is a post-mandatory school that enables young people to choose a professional orientation at the beginning of their second year, to be prepared for a future profession. The students also have to follow 10 days internships, during their second year, in the specific field of their option.

Currently the school offers four different orientations:

1. Specific Option – Arts
 2. Specific Option – Communication & Information
 3. Specific Option – Socio-Educational
-

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4. Specific Option – Health

During the first year, all the students follow exactly the same curriculum. The idea is to create a fifth Specific Option – Sports for all the young people that are following the SAE measures.

Young athletes that are trained in professional structures, already have a feet in the professional world since they are surrounded by different people from different environments; trainers, physical trainers, physiotherapists, and doctors for the sport side, and also administrative directors, accountants, hospitality and community managers from the managing side.

Many young athletes from the Elite wish to stay in the sport world once they are done with their career – or if they do not succeed to attain the top.

The Specific Option courses, at the Ecole de Culture General, amounts to 6 hours classes in the second year and 8 hours in the third year. The idea for the new option, is to select, two hours classes from the Specific Option Soco-educational (in the 2nd and the 3rd Year), two hours from the Specific Option Communication & Information (in the 2nd and the 3rd Year), and two hours from the Specific Option health in 2nd year and four in the 3rd year.

Figure 11, Example of the Specific Option “Sports” – Schedule

<i>Schedule</i>	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year
Common Discipline	25/30	19/23	16/18
French	5	5	5
second Language 1: German - English - Italian	4	4	4
second language 2: German - English - Italian	4		
Mathematics	3	3	3
Biology	1		
Chemistry	1		
Physics	1		
Law	1		
human sciences	2		
IT	1		
Civism		2	
Geography		1	
History		1	
Philosophy			2
<i>Drawing</i>	<i>1</i>		
<i>Arts</i>	<i>1</i>		
<i>Drama Arts</i>	<i>1</i>	2	
<i>Music</i>	<i>1</i>		
<i>Sport</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>
vocational guidance	0.5		
étude surveillées	1		
Complementary Option		2	2
Personal Thesis		0.5	1
Specific Option - Sports		6	8
Biology		2	
Health			2
Psychology			2
Law&Politics		2	
Sociology			2
IT&Web		2	
Media Sociology			2
Total	25	25	24

	1st Year courses
	2nd Year courses
	3rd Year courses
	to discuss - Not Necessary

Source: Direction Générale DIP (2015, pp.8-11)
Table made by myself, based on the existing classes.

The goal of the creation of this Specific Option is to enable them to follow a multidisciplinary curriculum, based on the sport area, that can help them to have an overview of the different jobs related to sport for their future professional career. The internship required during the second year could be done within the club, in one specific area. Moreover, in order to lighten a little bit the schedule of the young athletes, classes such as drawing, arts, music and sports could be cancelled. They will then have 25 hours of class per week, which is reasonable in terms of quantity.

The setting up of such a program will have relatively low costs for the State since all the courses already exist and there are no needs to create specific ones.

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The current Director of the Cycle d'Orientation of Cayla, Pierre Bischofberger, thinks *“that’s the best solution for all the parties involved. The athlete will follow a curriculum, which coincides with his sport. The club or the association can encourage its players to follow this curriculum, and to understand better the functioning of a professional club and its specificities. The State will have to invest little money and will respect its current policy on the SAE measures, by integrating young players as much as possible in normal classes, with normal people”*¹².

4.2.1.2 A Sport-Study “Maturité Gymnasiale”

The idea is to create a specific High school diploma (Maturité Gymnasiale) for elite athletes in order to give them the envy and the possibility not to quit their studies at the age of 16.

The sport-study “Maturité Gymnasiale” would include only the main courses, in other words; French, Mathematics, German, English and the Specific Option (OS). In order to make things simpler, the students will be able to choose almost all the OS available, except the ones of Physics & Maths application and Biology & Chemistry, because these courses would require additional classes.

The student would have to choose one out of seven Specific Option choices¹³, knowing that if he takes one of the two national languages (or English) as an OS, he will have to follow the other one as a normal course. The OS would start in his 1st or his 2nd year (depending on his choice). Then, during the two last years of high school (3rd and 4th), he will have to choose an additional option, the OC (Complementary Option)¹⁴.

With these arrangements, the actual measures in place won’t evolve too much. The athlete could stay in a “normal” class; he would be able to miss class if he/she has a competition. The schedule would just be lightened in order to motivate the young to pursue his studies.

¹² Pierre BISCHOFBERGER, Director of the Cycle d’Orientation de Cayla, and person responsible for the implementation of team sports within CO.

¹³ OS: German, English, Spanish, Italian, Latin, Greek, Economy & Law, Arts

¹⁴ OC: History, Geography, Philosophy, Arts

Table 12, Example of a “Sport-Study Maturity” Schedule

SCHEDULE	Fundamental courses				Specific Option				Complementary Option			
	Years				Years				Years			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Course	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
French	6	4	4	4								
German	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Italian	4	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
English	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Spanish					3	4	4	5				
Latin	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Greek					4	4	6	6				
Mathematics	4	4	4	4								
OS Economy&Law					0	4	5	8			4	4
OS Arts					0	6	7	8				
History											4	4
Geography											4	4
Philosophy											4	4
Arts / Cinema											4	4
Total	15	19	24	27								

SCHEDULE	Fundamental courses				Specific Option				Complementary Option			
	Years				Years				Years			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Course	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
French	6	4	4	4								
German	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Italian	4	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
English	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Spanish					3	4	4	5				
Latin	3	3	3	3	0	4	4	5				
Greek					4	4	6	6				
Mathematics	4	4	4	4								
OS Economy&Law					0	4	5	8			4	4
OS Arts					0	6	7	8				
History		4	4									
Geography		4	4									
Philosophy		4	4									
Arts / Cinema		4	4									
Total	19	23	19	23								

Source: Direction Générale DIP (2016, p.16)
 Table made by myself, based on the existing classes.

The number of hours is increasing over the four years (figure on the left). In order to stabilize and to distribute the courses evenly, the idea is to shift the OC courses during the two first years (figure on the right). The young athletes will then have between 19 hours to 23 hours of classes per week, instead of 34.

In order to make the athletes able to catch up with the other “maturity classes”, it would be interesting that all the sport associations of the Canton (Football, Ice Hockey, Swimming, Volley-ball), during summer, set up two or three hours per week, a specific class.

The idea with the implementation of such a program is to enable the young athlete to have – let’s say – a minimum post-mandatory education in order that he doesn’t have to start from zero at the end of his sport career. This diploma could give him/her access to a link in order to start another training.

This idea of a “sport-study Maturity” should be brought at the National level from the associations themselves, in order to explain their needs and why this diploma could be helpful in the promotion of a new generation of athletes. Moreover, it would also help if not only Geneva brings up this idea but all the Cantons involved in the training of athletes.

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4.2.1.3 High School for Athletes

The third idea, which is also the less feasible at the moment, is the creation of a unique establishment, with all the athletes following the SAE program. This building would offer the possibility to follow the three – post-mandatory – curriculums, with a reduction in the choice of options; High School, Business School and Ecole de Culture Générale

This gathering of athletes could simplify the planning process; enable clubs and association to better communicate on the training schedule of each athlete or teams.

However, this proposition is not feasible at the moment for many reasons. Firstly, there are not enough athletes to make it profitable in the long run. Secondly there are no infrastructures available, and constructing a new building would be too expensive. Finally, the State will have to hire more staff, and today, the Canton of Geneva is more in a perspective of reducing costs, and cutting jobs.

4.3 Impact for the future: Win-win situation

The goal of this chapter was to give reasonable recommendations on how to optimize the SAE measures in place, without impacting too much on the budget available.

The best proposition and the more feasible one, to begin with, would be the creation of a specific Sport Option at the ECG Schools.

This solution would enable each young athlete to understand better the functioning of a professional club, and to see all the different job opportunities this specific environment has to offer for the future.

It is also important for a professional club to have educated players in order for them to develop "on the field" intelligence, which also comes from an education at school.

Finally, the implementation of this proposal would require only a few investments in terms of cost from the State. In addition, it would keep the unifying structure the Département de l'Instruction Publique put in place, by integrating as much as possible young athletes in "normal classes" without making any prejudice.

Even if Geneva does not welcome lots of international or national events within the Canton, supporting the promotion of a new generation of athletes in investing for a better sport-study program would be a nice calling card that the State could use in the future.

5. Conclusion

This thesis demonstrates the important talents potential in Switzerland and also in Geneva. More and more football players, who are less than 21 years old, are playing in a professional team in one of the two main championships.

The current training structures and academies in place are performing well knowing the low level of disposable means in each club. In comparison with the financial means of European clubs, we can say that Switzerland succeeds in training young talents. The academy label of the Swiss Football Association is an example of optimum organization within each club and regions. However, the SFA should be more involved in the education of the young athletes by integrating educational standards in the training label and in the Swiss Football Association principles, like in England and in France,

The “sport-art-étude” measures in Geneva are not bad. Since their implementation in 2011, lots of efforts are being made. However, there is still a too high percentage of young adults, quitting their studies after the secondary school, due to a lack of places and of arrangements in the schedule, which is still too tight in terms of amounts of hours. The suggestions raised in this thesis (the sport-study maturity or the specific option - Sport at the ECG) should help the young athletes to find a good compromise between the importance of their studies and the practice of their sports.

However a solution should be found to give access to more athletes in the SAE programs. Today the access is too elitist. For example in football, only the ones who can play in the junior national team can gain access to the SAE program. But from the U16, all the players are considered as the “elite” of their region, and would deserve also to follow an adaptable sport-study curriculum. Furthermore, the athletes with a little bit less talent are the ones who would need to cover themselves if they don't succeed to become professional, while the more talented have a better chance to do so. Besides, opening the SAE program to more athletes, by that I mean to all the ones playing in an elite team, does not cost much more than having a normal student, following the general curriculum.

Regarding what has been said, it would not be a bad idea to reconsider on the State budget; and especially the distribution between sports and the culture. With the CHF 73 million available, only CHF 3 million are for the Sports, while CHF 70 million go to the Culture.

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Appendix 1: Interview with Mr. Stéphane ROCHE,

Academy Director of The Olympique Lyonnais - France

1. What is the legal structure of the Academy? Is it an entire part (entity) of the club, or an independent organ?

The Academy of The Olympique Lyonnais is considered as an association to the CFA (Championnat de France Amateur), which allows it to have subsidies and public contributions. But it is also connected financially to the OL Group. For example if it finds itself overdrawn, the subsidies generally do not cover all, like the education, the educators, the licenses of the players are directly linked to the budget of the group. The frame (educators, trainers) is paid by OL SASU (Simplified stock company to unique partner)

2. What are the requirements from the Ligue 1 for the formation centre (in terms of structure, framing, education, financing)?. Does the club have to follow a certain number of standards?

Most of the clubs have a training centre allowing them to keep their best players. The problem is that a professional club cannot offer an « aspirant » or a « trainee » a contract before the age of 16. Without a training centre the club would lose those players.

The club has to meet certain requirements in term of structure. The approvals with the FFF (French Federation of Football) are made every 4 years but every year we make an update day so that there is a follow-up season by season.

Concerning infrastructures, it is necessary to meet certain requirements; in terms of the numbers of fields, locker rooms, private study rooms, accommodation etc. From those specific requirements, The National Technical Direction (Management) is able to classify training centres into different categories: A, B or C.

- Category A: Possibility of having 80 players under contract (convention)

- Category B: Less good structures, smaller potential, thus limitation in terms of the number of players whom we can integrate and the number of contracts we can offer.

The club does not receive any subsidy from the FFF except for the teams' travels. The financing of the training centre is thus made by the Group itself (OL SASU).

3. What are the different functions within the academy? (Staff, players framing, follow up, etc.)

There are approximately 40 to 50 people at the level of the supervision. There are also school tutors with whom we have temporary work agreements, and we also have some jobs such as physical trainers under agreements.

It is also important to note that we have many volunteers that escort the teams when traveling.

4. How many players are part of the Academy?

We have:

- *80 players under training convention (16-20 years)*
- *60 players in pre-training (preformation) (13-15 years)*
- *80 awakening (éveil) (U7-U12)*

Total: 240 players

5. What is the average duration of a player within the academy? Are there any criteria to maintain or not the player in the Academy? Is there a selection system to go through in order to stay in the academy?

Knowing that our categories go from U7 to U20, we can keep a young player during 14 years.

As a general rule, the young players that integrate the academy in the categories U13-U15 have a bigger tendency to stay up to the end (U20). The earlier they integrate the

academy, the more they have the chance to succeed, as far as the player stay realistic in terms of ambition. It is essential to preserve their freshness without being worn out by the system. That's why our academy aims for excellence.

The key of this long route is to make it interesting, fulfilling and to create an improvement process and philosophy.

Concerning the recruitment, we have open doors accessible to all at first. We also invite players of bordering clubs (regional) and more we move forward in an age category more we go further at the national level to look for potential talents. At the age of 13, professional scout already evaluates the player.

Every additional year at the academy gives the passage to the upper level or not. Tests are made for the sports level and we also evaluate the attitude of the player. An academic failure does not compromise the passage to the upper level

6. What are the criteria recruitments? Is there a budget for the recruitment? (Amount)

In Lyon: technical basis, capacity to play in a team and for the team (which is also a part of the development of the player). The personal environment of the player is also taken into account.

Naturally we also test the athletic aspects, and we make a profiling on the potential learning of the player.

It is difficult to speak about a specific budget for the recruitment since every player comes from a different environment and that there are various things to be taken into account (accommodation, traveling costs, canteens etc.)

7. How important is the schooling for young players within the Academy? Are there partnerships with schools? What are the courses taught, and what is the school structure (is it the same as the public school?)

There is a certain tendency as everywhere. The young people whose parents are committed succeed.

On the other hand if the parents disengage (which often arrives) many do not succeed, we try then to put sports penalties only so that they become aware of the importance of the studies.

For those who give up, we look every year to find new solutions. But it is not always easy.

The teenager has the possibility to follow various pathways, as every young person of their age:

- CAP (Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle)
- Bac Pro Commerce
- Bac Généraux (S, ES, STMG)

In the sports section, the Bac (High school) is fulfilled normally in 3 years. The courses, which overlap the training schedule, are caught up by remedial courses, within the academy (thanks to external tutors).

We have decided to pursue a Bac "formation" in 3 years (instead of 4 previously) so that on the last two years of internship, players from U19 to U20) are totally released from their school obligations and can concentrate all their energy on their football training.

Our players are mixed in the classes with other sportsmen/women (basketball players, handball players, hockey players etc.). They all have an access to the sport study

8. How the « sport-study » is divided within the academy?

See planning [Appendix 7](#)

9. Are there school objectives for young players of the Academy?

The agreement (convention) obliges us to give a complete training scheme as much for football as for the schooling. The success in itself is a part of the project. That is why we try to have the most possible success.

10. What types of training/curriculum are “proposed” within the academy (Is professional training, (apprenticeship) promoted compared to high school studies, that are destined to a university future?)

See question 7.

The vocational training (internship) is still, at this day, not compatible with the life of a young soccer player. But we are working on it.

11. What kind of school (or professional) diploma do the players of the academy acquire at the end of their scholarship?

See question 7

12. In average, how many players of the academy (in %) can hope, one day to play with the 1st Team (Professional), and how many players can become professional (in another club i.e.)?

At the end of the formation, we have 2 to 3 signatures in another club or formative club. In Lyon, we turn between 4 to 8 players in the first team (professional) at the end of the formation.

13. What do the players do when they leave the academy? (What is their future?)

For the greater part, they arrive in professionals clubs or in good amateur clubs (CFA) where it is still possible to live as a professional football player in France. However it won't be enough to make a living for the rest of their life. That is why we try to show them the importance to study for a profession.

The players that leave the training centre (academy) can also continue in the football environment by joining for example the reserve-team of the Olympique Lyonnais, which can also give them a certain financial guarantee for their future.

14. What are the monthly/yearly costs (approximately) of such a structure?

The costs for the girls and the boys are mixed for the training part. It represents approximately 7 to 8 millions (This budget takes into account contracts, travels, coaches, educators (tutors), accommodation etc.).

The budget amounts to 4 to 5 millions if we only take into account the men's training in the academy,

15. According to you, what is the strong point of not only the OL Academy but also the one of all the Academies of the Ligue 1?

In France there was a will to set up the real training of coaches and executive managers of good quality. Every coach develops then his skills in-house (on-the field)

What makes the difference at the Olympique Lyonnais is not only the stability in the training but also having former players who continue the tradition, and the same philosophy stays. The durability is a guarantee.

We also have a big capacity to integrate the young teams with the professional one (important collaboration).

16. And the weak point?

We can always do and be better. Today the club is in a phase of change. Moving to the Parc OL (new stadium) as well as the new academy to Meizieux, we want to set off on something new. But it is important that we keep our spirit, and our knowledge when changing in this new direction.

Here in Gerland, the amateurs (associations) and the pros were side by side. Now we shall be separated. Thanks to the closeness we had, it had created lots of connections and exchanges. It is something that we are going to try to keep in the future. There will be 2 km between the Parc OL (Stadium) and the Academy in Meizieux.

That's the main reason why the academy is moving to Meizieux in order to keep this "closeness" with the professional teams.

**17. On a scale from 1 to 10, which grade would you give to the Academy?
What are the points that may need an improvement in the future?**

I know that we still have a margin of progress. Perfection is hard to reach, while Excellence is possible.

18. What does a typical day look like for a player of the Academy?

- 15-16years old: 4-5 training per week and 1 game
- 16-18 years old: 5-6 training per week and 1 game
- 18-20 years old: 7-8 training per week and 1 game

*See planning U18, **Appendix 7***

19. What are the main reconversion domains of French professional players at the end of their career?

In category U18-U20, we offer them to follow and to take the coach training diploma so that they can see better from the inside how things are developing and put in place. It can also help them in the development as players.

20. How is the Swiss Football league perceived in France?

At the international level, we see that there is quality, good players and a good game. We feel that there is an important thorough work, which is made.

At the level of clubs, it is difficult to express an opinion because we have much less reading and visions about it since it is only possible to follow the games on Swiss TV.

21. Have you ever heard of the Servette Football Club?

I have never understood how the SFC did not managed to reconcile a project of training with its pro team, which could have brought the club to be more long lasting,

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

and to have a weight in the Swiss soccer. There is a big lack of stability and that is what is the most harmful presently for the club.

Current situation

Servette FC tries to differentiate itself in Switzerland and would be open to start partnership with foreign clubs. Servette FC went through financial difficulties these past few years and they are trying to get back on track. However it is difficult to find financial support either from the state or from other institutions. Every club knows that their future depends on young talent, that's why it is important to attract them and keep them as long as possible.

At the moment, Servette FC doesn't have a huge financial capacity to develop and offer modern Academy. However it has the History and its name to attract young players.

This idea of partnerships would be to find young talents and offer them the possibility to follow 1 or 2 training camps per year with Europeans clubs. The partner club would help Servette FC to develop and improve its current infrastructure and in exchange it would have 100% of the rights on the young players for the future.

In my opinion it would be a win-win situation since the young talents would be able to follow professional training camp and at the same time develop their capabilities by obtaining playing time in a different championship.

Stéphane ROCHE

The Olympique Lyonnais lived some painful experiences with Servette FC these last seasons. With the new organization, a little more stability and the team back in the elite, we could be ready to start to negotiate something. But we also have to settle down quietly in our new place and to take time to think about it. But the door is not closed.

Appendix 2: Interview with Mr. Thierry COTTING

Academy Director of Servette Football Club 1890 S.A – Switzerland

1. What is the legal structure of the Academy? Is it an entire part (entity) of the club, or an independent organ?

Servette Football Club 1890 SA is a foundation with a Foundation Board, which takes care of managing the Incorporated Company (The Foundation Board, so-called Foundation 1890, was created in June 2015). Inside this council there the Incorporated Company in which the U21 team is included (because semi-professional) and the Association (Academy).

It is important to understand that the U21 team is under the association of the academy (hierarchically speaking). However for the game license (for the players), the U21 team must have the licenses from the Incorporated company (because if a player is called to the elite team he must be eligible). That is why they have two different numbers of licenses.

It is also important to note that there are two operating budgets: one for the association and the other one for the Inc. Company.

2. What are the requirements from the ASF (Swiss Football Association) for the formation centre? (In terms of structure, framing, education, financing). Does the club have to follow a certain number of standards?

There is a training label. In Switzerland, the Swiss Association of football (ASF) defined a training policy in the form of a partnership divided into geographical regions (13 regions)

The Geneva Partnership has as its mission, to organize and to set up the structures of training.

Servette FC has a partnership with Etoile Carouge FC and Meyrin FC who begins from the U14 until the U21. (Project Footeco)

The Project "Footeco" is a structure, which comes from the elite club and the surroundings ones.

In Geneva there are four so-called elite clubs. Etoile Carouge FC, Meyrin FC, Servette FC and ACGF (association cantonale genevoise de football) that hold a unit Footeco. Servette has eight partner clubs within the framework of this project: Avanchets, Vernier, City, Olympic of Geneva, Laconnex, Interstar, Signal-Bernex and the Italian CS. These clubs announce to the Servette FC their young players having the biggest potential. At the end of May, we make a census of approximately 40 players, that we will have to reduce to 18 young people having a certain potential according to the criteria "PISTE"¹⁵ of the ASF.

Meyrin, Carouge and the ACGF do exactly the same thing within their geographical zones. Then, this group of 18 players trains at Balaxert once a week during all the season, every Wednesday. This team is called "Cellule FE12 of Servette FC". It means that they have an additional training in comparison with the other players of their club and are surrounded with other excellent players, which urges them to add an additional stage in their sports program. From 11 to 14 years, these players follow the Foot eco curriculum so that the club can observe them during a long period. At the end of the FE14 either they integrate the U15 of Servette, Etoile-Carouge or FC Meyrin, or they return to their original club. For the self-fulfillment of the children, it is the best solution.

This recruitment is considered as "intelligent" because it is made in association with all the neighbouring clubs.

To acquire the label of training, Servette FC has to fulfil certain requirements to be able to obtain it (number of trainers full-time, infrastructure etc.)

It is important to understand the structure in "pyramid" of the football in Geneva and thus the training, which is offered to the young players. (Structure in place since 2012)

- 1. U13-14: preparation for the elite (There are four team of each group --> 8 teams)*

¹⁵ KNÄBEL Peter, août 2014, *Concept de promotion de la relève de l'Association Suisse de Football*, Association Suisse de Football, [PDF Online], p.8
http://www.football.ch/fr/Portaldata/1/Resources/dokumente/footeco/SFV_NWF-Brosch_f_4k.pdf

2. *U15: from these 4 teams (below), we create 3 teams. The best players go to the Servette FC team in U15, the second group with Etoile Carouge and the third group with Meyrin FC*
3. *U16: from the three teams below, we create two teams of U16. The best players integrate Servette in the U16a, and the others go with Carouge in U16b*
4. *U18-U21: from this stage, there is only a single team of each category that is trained in Servette FC.*

The biggest advantage of the football in Geneva, is that the distances are short, which facilitate the common gatherings, as well as the range of schedule for trainings (better collaborations between Coaches and Clubs)

3. What are the different functions within the academy? (Staff, players framing, follow up, etc..)

- *1 secretary*
- *1 “sport-study” manager*
- *1 Technic Director (Thierry Cotting)*
- *1 Talent Manager*
- *1 Training Manager*
- *1 Pre-training Manager (U15)*
- *1 Coach U18, 1 Coach U16*
- *1 Coach for each team: U14-13-12-11-10-9-8 M14*
- *1 foot communautaire manager (U7-U13)*
- *1 Physical trainer*
- *1 Doctor with a mandate*
- *2 Physical Therapist at the disposal of the academy, four times a week.*
- *2 Scouting Manager with a mandate*
- *1 specific coach for all the strikers of the Elite team*
- *1 professional coach for the goalies*

4. How many players are parts of the Academy?

There are 173 players within the academy of the Servette FC, from the team U8 to the U21.

This number remains relatively stable because there are only the players with a high potential that are part of the club.

In Servette FC the "football school" from the U4 to U6 (Ecole de foot) does not exist anymore. It is now the local municipalities, who offer this "service" for the youngest players.

5. What is the average duration of a player within the academy? Are there any criteria to maintain or not the player in the Academy? Is there a selection system to go through in order to stay in the academy?

It is difficult to give precise figures because of the situation of the Servette FC these last years.

However, Philippe Senderos, a Swiss international player, began in the school of football of the SFC (when this formula still existed) and he ended in the 1st team, and he is now part of the Swiss national team.

Today the conception of the recruitment has evolved. That's why it is difficult to give precise figures, since this structure is quite new.

What we have to make for the future is to concentrate ourselves on the U15 up to the first team. It is at this age that there is a potential or not to go farther.

Today it is very difficult to have clear returns because of the lack of stability of the club. It would be interesting to make this analysis in approximately 5 years to analyse the evolution of our U15 and to see where they are.

In Geneva we are lucky enough to have a high potential of talented players. There are approximately 1000 children, in 65 different clubs. On these 1000 there will be 16-18 players who will have an interesting profile.

We also have a Vision over 5 years. Here are the points that need to be improved:

- *Stabilize the structure and improve it*
- *Keep our trainers*
- *Improve Scouting within the "Big Geneva" and in its neighbourhood*
- *Set up host-family to recruit farther than inside the Canton.*

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

- *Boarding school? Why not, but it's not one of our priorities.*

6. What are the criteria recruitments? Is there a budget for the recruitment? (Amount)

2 million budget for the association which is all-inclusive, salaries of the coaches, licenses, etc.)

7. How important is the schooling for young players within the Academy? Are there partnerships with schools? What are the courses taught, and what is the school structure (is it the same as the public school?)

We managed to set up during the compulsory education (Cycle d'Orientation), a gathering of the players in the same establishment (U14-15 of Servette together at the same school, and the same for the U14-15 of Carouge.

These youngsters have two study periods (études surveillées) per week as well as two trainings between 11:30 am and 1:30 pm so that they can be back home earlier in the evening.

There is also an important educational follow-up. Every day, two trainers are going to eat with the young players at their school and they also accompany them during the study periods etc.).

In the post-compulsory level (high-school) it becomes more complicated. Some players go to ECG, other in the business school (Ecole de commerce) or in high-school (College). A gathering in the same establishment is impossible today. But we are trying to collaborate well with schools so that their schedules are the most fitted out as possible.

The main problem is that on one hand we can collaborate very well with one establishment and have a good cooperation with the professors and the direction, while on the other hand, we can have difficulties with other establishments, which can make the organization more difficult.

Furthermore today we have 7 players of M16 who are selected with the Swiss national team, which corresponds to approximately two and a half months out of school.

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

8. How the « sport-study » is divided within the academy?

Today the SAE (Sport-Art-Etude) is a little “Do-it-yourself” which puts a lot of responsibility on the young person: he has to manage to find a tutor when he misses the classes, to take the course notes from classmates who are not part of the SAE etc...

We try to help them and to push them as much as possible.

Now, according to me, we can do better in terms of organization. In particular because of the problem with the willingness of schools (to adapt their schedule for the players). This is where it is sometimes difficult to be equal towards each player.

9. Are there school objectives for young players of the Academy?

We want them to succeed. We try to be behind them as much as possible. But it is still difficult at the moment to give precise objectives.

10. What types of training/curriculum are “proposed” within the academy (Is professional training, (apprenticeship) promoted compared to high school studies that are destined to a university future?)

What would be needed is to have an establishment in common, with 3 or 4 types of training gathered at the same place. It would be not only much simpler in terms of organization for the club but also for the young players to find themselves with other sportsmen who have the same lifestyle. This is because it's not easy for a young player today to be in class with people who have not the same obligations / lifestyle.

11. What kind of school (or professional) diploma do the players of the academy acquire at the end of their scholarship?

The Basis ones: ECG, Ecole de Commerce, Collège, Apprentissage

12. In average, how many players of the academy (in %) can hope, one day to play with the 1st Team (Professional), and how many players can become professional (in another club i.e.)?

Today there are approximately 14 players from the Academy that are playing with 1st team.

13. What do the players do when they leave the academy? (What is their future?)

Some are going to play with the first team of Carouge. Others stop and go back to their studies. But after the setbacks of Servette FC these last years it was difficult to have a good following of the players.

14. What are the monthly/yearly costs (approximately) of such a structure?

2'000'000 CHF/12 = ~150'000.-

15. According to you, what is the strong point of not only the Academy of Servette FC but also the one of all the Academies of the Super League?

What we are able to do with the means at our disposal.

Our U18 won the Swiss Championship last year and played 4 UEFA Youth League games.

The U15 have just won the Nike CUP, for the first time since 2003.

This win will enable the U15 to take part in the European championship that will take place in Finland, from May 5th to May 9th.

16. And the weak point?

- *The heavy History of the club these last years with the bankruptcy of 2005 and the administrative relegation of 2015.*
- *The Instability of the club*

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

- *The lack of modern Infrastructures*

17. On a scale from 1 to 10, which grade would you give to the Academy?

What are the points that may need an improvement in the future?

On the other hand, to become more successful it is essential to improve the infrastructures at our disposal, and to develop collaborations with host families and companies (partners which will take future apprentices).

18. What does a typical day look like for a player of the Academy?

16 years old: 5 training per week and 1 game

18 years old: 5 training per week and 1 game

21 years old: 6-7 training per week and 1 game

19. What are the main reconversion domains of Swiss professional players at the end of their career?

Many take the UEFA Diploma in order to become trainer and to stay in the football world. Others go back to their studies.

20. From which Academies are you taking example?

In Switzerland, I would say Basel, Young Boys, Zürich and GC. They gave themselves the means to arrive where they are today.

Last word:

Today there are 285'000 license holders in Switzerland, including feminine football. This number equals the one in Paris and Ile-de-France

The national Team and the other Swiss selections (juniors) have been quite performing the last 15 years. The Swiss football is in relatively good shape.

Appendix 3: Interview with Mr. Gary ISOTT

Academy Director of Crystal Palace FC – London

1. What is the legal structure of the Academy? Is it an entire part (entity) of the club, or an independent organ?

The Academy of Crystal Palace is an entire part of the club. Hierarchically speaking it is below the first team, which provide players for the management to select.

The total budget of Crystal Palace is around 100 million £.

2. What are the requirements from the Premier League for the formation centre (in terms of structure, framing, education, financing). Does the club have to follow a certain number of standards?

It exists different categories of Academies. Crystal Palace, Watford and Bournemouth are the three last clubs being in the Category 2. All the other academies of the Premier league are in Category 1. Since we've been in the Premier league for only three years it is difficult to be at the top but we try to improve it every day.

Clubs from the Category 1 receive a 750'000 £ grant (by the league) while the ones in Category 2 receive 480'000 £.

In order to be "upgraded" or even to stay in a certain category, it exists different criteria standards on facilities, staffing, training programs (such as coaching methodologies, schooling etc.)

3. How many persons are part of the staff?

Today, at Crystal Palace academy, we have 10 full time and 15 part-time coaches. With the medical management team and other person involved we are more or less 40.

4. What are the different functions within the academy? (Staff, players framing, follow up, etc..)

We have a meeting with each player once every 6 weeks. Moreover we have 5 sit down sessions (players reviews) on different aspects of their training, football, social, and academic topics.

Concerning the staff, we have approximately 30 persons, with the coaches, physical therapists, physical trainers, team managers etc.

5. How many players are part of the Academy?

From the team U7 to the U21 we have about 230 players

6. What is the average duration of a player within the academy?

It is variable. Generally speaking I would say 3 to 4 years would be the average.

7. Are there any criteria to maintain or not the player in the Academy? Is there a selection system to go through in order to stay in the academy?

Once a year we are making selections. In order to do that, we base it on three criteria; physical, spirit and ability. We are doing tests not only on the physical condition of a player but also to see his ability and attitude when playing with a team. We then grade each player on a scale from 1 to 10. We established a rule of 3 x 7. The young player needs to have at least 2 x 7 in order to pass the test and to stay within the academy.

We also have some scout teams that are in charge of our recruitment. Those scouts analyze the game of Academies from clubs of the Premier league (league 1) and the Championship (League 2) every Sunday. They then make a selection.

We also have 5 regional scouts in London with their own teams (about 40 scouts in London) and their mission is to go and watch players from other clubs within London and to find some players with interesting potential. However, in our Championship it is not legal to recruit foreign players until the age 16.

**8. What are the criteria recruitments? Is there a budget for the recruitment?
(Amount)**

See question 5

The Head of recruitment of the academy organizes 6 meetings with scouts, regularly during the year (more or less every 2 years)

There is a budget within the academy for the recruitment, but it is difficult to give precise amount.

**9. How important is the schooling for young players within the Academy?
Are there partnerships with schools? What are the courses taught, and
what is the school structure (is it the same as the public school?)**

The players from the U13 to U16 go to the same school. Four mornings per week they have training from 8am to 9:30am. Then we have a bus that brings them to school (not far from the academy, public school) at 10:00am. Every Tuesday and Thursday, the players are taking the lunch at the academy and have an afternoon practice.

The players from U16 to U18 years generally have class one and half days a week. The idea for them is to get enough points in order to have a university level and get a scholarship in America. I know that this system is very different from the one in France so I don't know exactly what is the equivalence in other countries.

All the players, from U13 to U18 follow the same curriculum. It would be too expensive and to complicated to have different program.

The players from U18 and upper are full-time players and they generally don't follow an education program.

10. How the « sport-study » is divided within the academy?

See question above. (9)

11. Are there any school objectives for young players of the Academy?

We try to have as often as possible direct feedbacks from teachers and supervisors. We also try to motivate them by not allowing them to practice (train) if they are not making sufficient effort for school

What I have found these last few years is that having all players in one school makes it easier to manage and have direct contact with everybody (teachers, supervisors, etc.)

12. What types of training/curriculum are “proposed” within the academy (Is professional training, (apprenticeship) promoted compared to high school studies that are destined to a university future?)

Like I have said above the academy is not able to offer different curriculums. It is quite frustrating for the players, but in terms of organization it is easier if we have the same for everybody

13. What kind of school (or professional) diploma do the players of the academy acquire at the end of their scholarship?

The players can receive a BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council). This diploma is a secondary school leaving qualification from England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Some players can also receive a NVQ, which is a National Vocational Qualifications. These diplomas can enable certain of them to obtain an American scholarship to study at a university in the US or in an English one (some universities may ask for complementary skills).

14. In average, how many players of the academy (in %) can hope, one day to play with the 1st Team (Professional), and how many players can become professional (in another club i.e.)?

The level of the premier league is very high, that's why we may have 1 player eligible for the first team every 2 to 3 years. However, we have more or less 1 player eligible to play in the Championship division every season.

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

15. What do the players do when they leave the academy? (What is their future?)

It depends. Some players are going back to their studies and go to university. Others are able to find a job. Some are playing football in lower league and others are going abroad. Finally some of our players become coaches or stay in the football environment.

16. What are the monthly/yearly costs (approximately) of such a structure?

I would say around 100'000£ a month

17. According to you, what is the strong point of not only the CP Academy but also the one of all the Academies of the Premier League?

In Crystal Palace I would say that the environment is a strong point. We can offer certain stability and an evolution perspective for the young athletes.

In the Premier League in general, teams such as Manchester, Arsenal or Liverpool offer great facilities, which is the strongest point of the league.

In the Premier League, however, young players play less. It would be better for them to start at the Championship level (second division) in order to gain experience. Today in the Premier League there are only 33% of English players.

18. And the weak point?

The main problem with the Premier League and the English academy is the difference of level in the game. The Premier league is the best league in the world, but it is very difficult for a young player to make it quickly, since the difference from young championship and the professional league is huge.

19. On a scale from 1 to 10, which grade would you give to the Academy?

What are the points that may need an improvement in the future?

I would grade our academy with a 6. We need to improve our infrastructure in order to become bigger and stronger, and why not to attain the label of Category 1.

20. What does a typical day look like for a player of the Academy?

16 years old: Until 16 years old, players have training every morning from 8am to 9:30 am and they then go to school. Twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursday they have an additional practice in the afternoon.

17-18 years old: Generally players from this category are at the academy from 8:30am to 3pm. They have not only trainings on the field, but also fitness or video sessions.

21 years old: Same as the U18. They are present at the academy 8:30am to 3pm and have different training sessions, such as yoga, gym, and video analysis. They also have lunch together.

21. What are the main reconversion domains of English professional players at the end of their career?

They mainly stay in the football world, by becoming players' agents, coaches, managers, or even sport journalists.

22. How is the Swiss Football league perceived in England?

It is difficult to give you a precise opinion since there is no coverage of the Swiss football league in England. If one or two clubs are playing at a European level such as the Champions League or the UEFA Cup we are able to follow their performance.

Have you ever heard of the Servette Football Club?

I have never heard of the Servette before.

Current situation

Servette FC tries to differentiate itself in Switzerland and would be open to start partnership with foreign clubs. Servette FC went through financial difficulties these past few years and they are trying to get back on track. However it is difficult to find financial support either from the state or from other institutions. Every club knows that their future depends on young talent, that's why it is important to attract them and keep them as long as possible.

At the moment, Servette FC doesn't have a huge financial capacity to develop and offer modern Academy. However it has the History and its name to attract young players.

This idea of partnerships would be to find young talents and offer them the possibility to follow 1 or 2 training camps per year with Europeans clubs. The partner club would help Servette FC to develop and improve its current infrastructure and in exchange it would have 100% of the rights on the young players for the future.

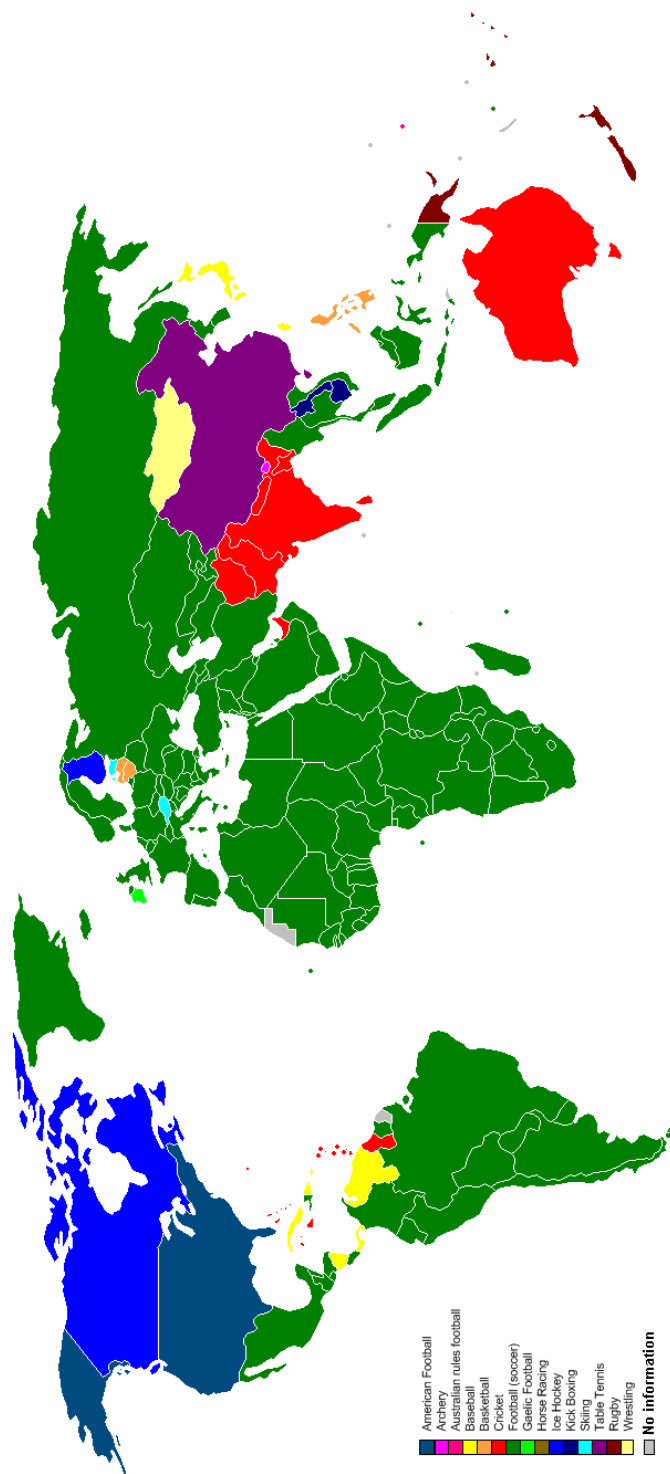
In my opinion it would be a win-win situation since the young talents would be able to follow professional training camp and at the same time develop their capabilities by obtaining playing time in a different championship.

Gary ISOTT:

It's difficult to say since we don't know very well the Swiss Championship. Moreover, nowadays, clubs change their management too often to have stability. But that's one of the most important points when signing an agreement or a partnership, to have a long-term vision with the other club.

Moreover I don't think, we would invest some money in another club. A strong collaboration, or a kind of partnership is worth considering, but in a few years.

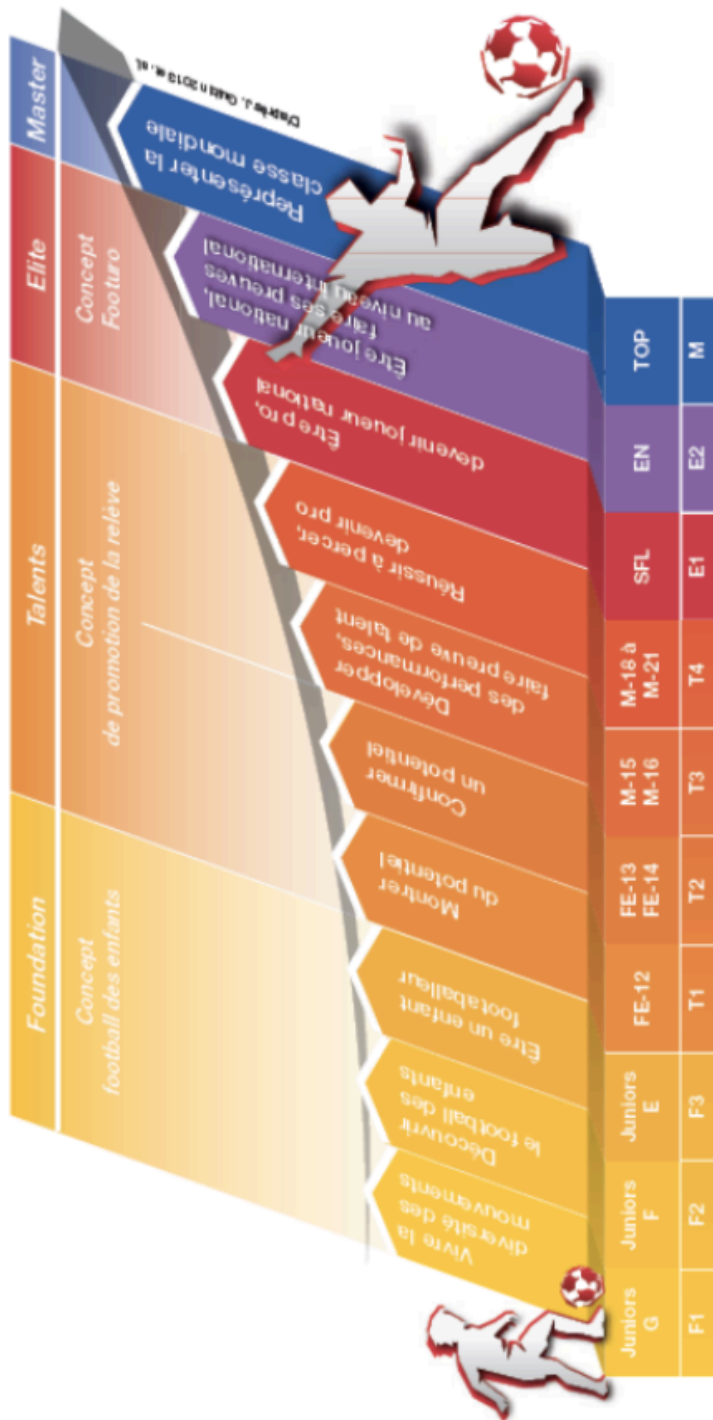
Appendix 4: Map of the Most Popular Sports in the World



Source: RABINOWITZ, (2012)

How to optimize the sport-study in Geneva for team sports, taking as a benchmark the educational system of football academies in Europe?

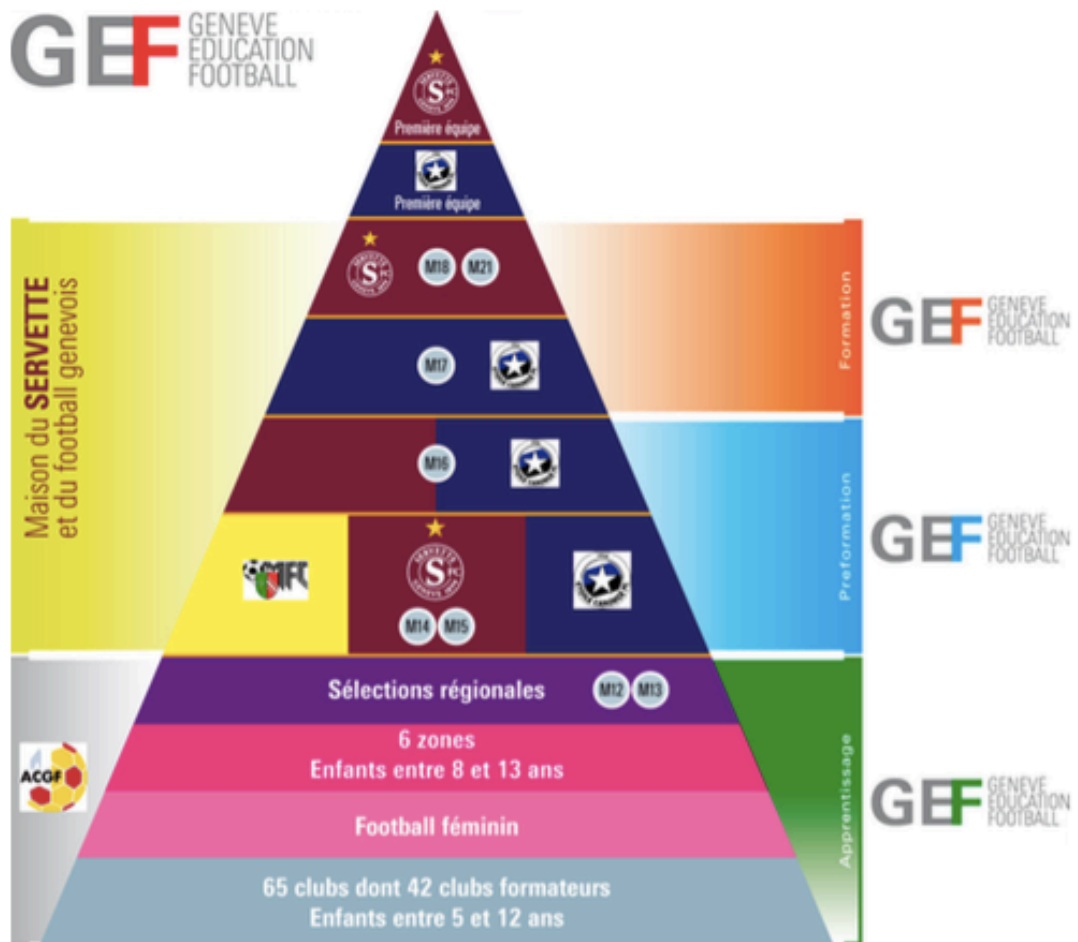
Appendix 5: Athletes development in the promotion of a new generation of players in the ASF



Source: KNÄBEL, (2014, p.6)

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Appendix 6: Pyramid of the training of football in Geneva



Source: PONT, (2013, p.50)

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Appendix 7: Schedule of the U18 of the Olympique Lyonnais

EMPLOI DU TEMPS HEBDOMADAIRE							
Heures	Lundi	Mardi	Mercredi	Jeudi	Vendredi	Samedi	Dimanche
8h-9h	COURS	COURS	ENTRAINEMENT	COURS	COURS	REPOS OU ENTRAINEMENT	REPOS
9h-10h							
10h-11h	REPAS	REPAS	REPAS	REPAS	REPAS		OU
11h-12h	COURS	COURS		COURS	COURS		
12h-13h							
13h-14h							
14h-15h							
15h-16h	REPOS ou ENTRAINEMENT	ENTRAINEMENT	ENTRAINEMENT	ENTRAINEMENT	ENTRAINEMENT	MATCH OU REPOS	MATCH
16h-17h	SOINS et REPAS	SOINS et REPAS	SOINS et REPAS	SOINS et REPAS	SOINS et REPAS		
17h-18h							
18h-19h	ETUDE						

Références à utiliser: COURS - ENTRAINEMENT - SPECIFIQUE (préciser) - SOINS - REPOS - MATCH - ETUDES (si surveillées)

Source: ROCHE, Olympique Lyonnais, Planning U18 (2016)

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Caroline MULHAUSER