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Dear Players, Parents, and Coaches:

I would like to suggest that you add something special to your game. It will raise your level of performance. It's fun, easy and unique because too few players do it regularly. It can make a positive impact on your personal development as an elite soccer player. What is it? Wait...

I speak with young female soccer players all over the country that share your love for the game of soccer. I ask them if they want to play for the U.S. Women's National Team or for a WUSA Professional Team. The response is always, "YES!"

These young players are smart. They know they have to be fit, develop their skills, and play in the most competitive environment possible. I ask them to name other things they can do to reach their dreams. Only a few mention what I want to suggest to you today. Women's National Team players Brandi Chastain and Ali Wagner have done it for years. U19 National Team player Lindsay Tarpley does it regularly. It shows in all of their performances at the international level. What is it?

I'll tell you! These U.S. National Team players watch as much soccer **in person** and **on television** as they can. I recommend that you do the same. You will improve significantly by watching and learning from the best female players in the world.

#### **How to be a student of the game:**

- Observe the players who play your position.
- Focus on the skills that make them successful.
- Study the decisions they make with and without the ball.
- Observe how much time and space they have or don't have.
- Notice their first touch, does it solve pressure or create pressure?
- Examine their fitness level. How fast, strong, and agile are these players?
- What kind of emotional intensity do they bring to the game?

These are all critical components of your development as a player. If you want to be great, you should watch great players play! Observe what they are doing and how they do it. Take this information to your backyard, practice or game field, and add it to your game. It will provide you with an important edge as a young soccer player. Whenever possible, attend a U.S. Women's National Team or a WUSA game! There is nothing like absorbing the exciting atmosphere experienced in person at the highest level. You will see the best players in the world playing for their countries and for the top women's soccer league on the globe. Another avenue to watch high level soccer is our college game, and everyone has a college team playing near their home. Ask your mom, dad, brother, sister or coach to take you to the best and highest level game in your area.

If you cannot attend a game, watch it on television. You can enjoy watching these great players and teams from your own home. Check out the U.S. National Team schedule at [www.ussoccer.org](http://www.ussoccer.org) and the WUSA schedule at [www.wusa.com](http://www.wusa.com), or in the Fall, college soccer at [www.ncaa.com](http://www.ncaa.com). If there isn't a women's game on TV, watch a men's game!

Join Brandi, Ali, Tarp and myself by becoming fans and students of the game. When you use what you learn from these talented players, you will take your game to a new level.

Keep Kicking!

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