

COACHES CORNER



<http://www.eteamz.com/gblightningsc/index.cfm?>
P.O. Box 1022, Green Bay, Wisconsin, 54305

Coaching Director Area By Bob Rickards

Coaches,

Five or six years ago, I took the job as Coaching Director for this club. I did this not because I felt I was the most qualified or that the pay was great. I did it because the president asked me to. She knew that I loved this club and had been involved in this club for eight years. She realized that the club needed my passion and organization.

At that time I was given a list of things to accomplish, this newsletter is one of them. I am happy to report that many items have been completed. Although I did not complete all my wishes, I truly believe this club is in a better spot now than then.

On January 1, I will turn the reigns over someone else. I still love this club, its ideas and its mission but it is time for someone else to take the lead. Oh...I will still be around as I believe the complex is the next major hurdle this club needs to ascend, so my focus will be more behind the scenes and getting the complex finished.

I have never been one to say "my way is the right way" but I do believe there are some keys to being a good coach and would like to share them with you now.

One....reputation, reputation, reputation. Everything you do in this sport is judged and your reputation is the key to drawing good quality players. Acting in a professional manner, looking the part and being prepared are truly keys to success. No kid or parent is going to come and play for a coach who yells and belittles kids. Treating a kid decently and honestly will go a long way in a parent's eyes.

Learn...this is an ever-changing game. If you don't continue to learn different techniques or strategies you are doing this game a disservice. The game is evolving daily. Players are more intelligent than years ago. The players I see now a days want more from a coach. They are hungry for more soccer tactics or techniques. If you are not willing to bring them new stuff then they will leave for someone who will.

Lastly, championship teams need three things to be successful: talent, attitude and discipline. The first two, your players control, the last one is yours. I do not believe we as coaches can develop talent with two practices a

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week. Sure you can teach them a new move or how to kick a ball but in the end the player has to be the one to train and practice on their own. Two 90 minute practices a week is not going to turn Johnny in Pele. Creativity and skill with the ball has to be developed individually along with a ball.

Attitude....a player with a bad attitude can destroy a team. Teams with the right attitude can win games. As a coach you can't make players come to practice with a good attitude but you can explain to them that the wrong attitude can affect the whole team.

Discipline is all the coach. I am not talking about shirts tucked in or running laps for cursing, although some of this needs to happen, I am talking about being disciplined enough to think beyond the poor calls from the referee and focus on winning the game. I am talking about being disciplined enough to stay with the game plan regardless of what happened in the game. It is this discipline that makes sure we all know what our jobs are at the end of the game when we are behind by one goal and what we need to do to win. It is this discipline that makes teams winners. I have lost games to teams who were not as talented because they used their talents well, had great attitudes and stuck to their game plan.

I have said this before...the club needs you so stay involved.

Hope to see you on the pitch....

All for soccer,

Bob

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Please see *Goalkeeper Article* on page 4

Coaching Corner

Via ZoomReports

Playing Time in Youth Sports – How to Handle Upset Parents

Some of the most heated discussions between parents and coaches are over playing time in youth sports. As a coach, it is difficult to have this conversation with a parent. Especially when the parent is very worked up. I have seen this happen countless times. Right after a game, an upset parent approaches a coach and says,

"Why didn't my child play. What do you have against my child. He is just as good as Johnny, and Johnny plays twice as much."

Here are some suggestions for coaches on how to handle a parent upset over playing time.

Initial Confrontation

When a parent approaches a coach in a somewhat hostile manner, the normal gut reaction is to go on the defensive. To start to cut the parent off before they finish talking. To become offended. To miss what the parent is saying while formulating rebuttals. The best thing you can do as a coach is let the parent get all of their feelings out and try to see it from their perspective.

Things to Keep in Mind:

1. Do not take any insults personally. The parent wants what is best for their child and the things that they say are probably a bit irrational.
2. View it as a cry for help. Remember that the parent is hurt, frustrated, or embarrassed.
3. View it as an opportunity to grow as a coach. This will not be the last difficult conversation you have and it is a perfect time to improve your communication skills.

Response

Show Empathy

Let the parent know that you understand how they feel, and that you would probably feel the same way.

Use the Sandwich Technique

When giving the parent reasons for their child's lack of playing time, sandwich it between 2 compliments. Compliment, Critique, Compliment.

Solution

Give the parent some steps that you both can take to help their child earn more playing time.

Playing Time in Sports - How Parents Should Handle

Lack of playing time in sports is a common and normal concern for parents. Unfortunately, this issue is the cause of many heated discussions between coaches and parents. Here are a few thoughts.

Before the Conversation

See It from the Coach's Perspective

This is extremely hard to do. One of the first thoughts that probably comes to your mind is that, "the coach has a personal vendetta against me or my child." Let me ease your mind and tell you that the odds of that are extremely low. If you go into the conversation with that mentality, there is no chance of a productive discussion. Try to remember that the coach probably feels just as bad about your child's lack of playing time. Here are some likely reasons that your coach has for not playing your child.

- Poor Technical Skills
- Does not Fit into the Team Formation
- Poor Attitude

As a parent, your first instinct is to get worked up and start to defend your child. Try to be aware of these feelings because they often lead to more negative thinking. Remember that you do not have all of the facts. Your coach probably has good reasons that you are not aware of.

During The Conversation

How Not to Start the Conversation

The worst thing you can do is put the coach on the defensive. This can happen if you start the conversation without taking into consideration that there is probably a good reason. Here is an example of a poor opening line.

- Hey coach, what do you have against my child. He is just as good as Johnny and only plays half of the time.

How to Start the Conversation

Here is an example of an opening line that does not put the coach on the defensive by acknowledging that there is probably a good reason for their decision.

I wanted to share with you my concerns about Ryan's playing time and hear if there is something he can do to earn more time on the field.

Listen to the Coach's Reasons

After starting the conversation, listen to the coach's reasons for why your child is not getting much playing time. Remember not to interrupt.

Listening Tips

- Inquire - Ask open ended questions
- Paraphrase - Paraphrase their reasons so that you are both on the same page.
- Acknowledge - Acknowledge that you understand where they are coming from.


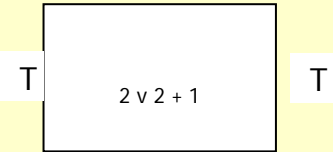
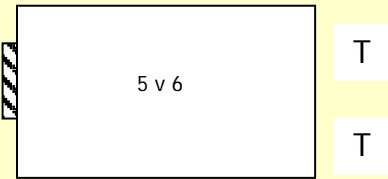
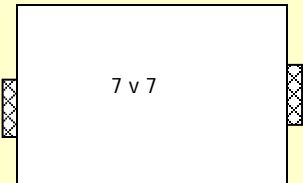
Come to a Solution Together

After hearing their reasons, together try to come up with solutions on how to get your child more playing time. Here are some suggestions that you can bring up to the coach.

- Ask the coach to give your child some simple drills to improve their technical skills.
- Have your coach tell your child some exercises to help improve their physical presence.

Featured Activity: Dribbling to beat and Opponent

Maintaining possession is a key to winning games. Especially close games. Developing a rhythm to play takes time. I love this practice I picked up from a "C" level course I took. It introduces dynamic stretching over static stretching. Encourage slow play to maintain possession and then emphasis speeding up when there is an opportunity to move forward. Teach the players to find the open extra player. I also love how this finishes....a full field scrimmage with lots of numbers up. I typically move the goals into the 18's to create a shorter field. Players without the ball should look for opportunities to make runs. Have fun!!!

<p>WARM UP (15 Minutes)</p> 	<p>ORGANIZATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 x 60 yard grid 3 player 1 ball Pass and Move Dynamic stretching in between 	<p>KEY COACHING POINTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication Good Passes Always Moving Use Combinations – specifically double pass
<p>INDIVIDUAL SKILLS (30 Minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coerver Moves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>BREAK (5 Minutes) TEAM SKILLS (15 Minutes)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 x 30 grid 2 v 2 + 1 Play to target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Possession Combination Play Be Patient wait till right opportunity Support Play Speed of Play Use Double pass or other combinations
<p>TEAM SKILLS (15 Minutes)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 x 60 grid One team possesses to score on big goal Other team works to get ball across line to targets <p>Progressions: Give extra points for shots made one touch and for goals made by using the non-dominant foot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look to penetrate when the time is right Switch the point of attack Watch shape Play out of pressure Combinations Mobility Timing of runs
<p>BREAK (10 Minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>RESTRICTED SCRIMMAGE (20 Minutes)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play 7 v 7 on half field No restrictions on players Play with shorter field to encourage more shooting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe to see if session has helped with possession Create team shape to maintain possession Keep rhythm by moving ball
<p>RESTRICTED SCRIMMAGE (20 Minutes)</p> <p>11v4 - 11v6 - 11v8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start the game with 11 players against 4. Try to get the players to maintain possession while moving forward Develop good scoring opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain shape Good pace on the ball Movement without the ball

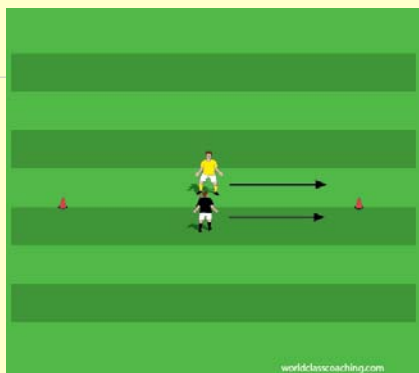
Goalkeeping Area:

Footwork, focus and fitness – FineSoccer.com

Start with 2 cones 8 yards apart. There are 2 keepers facing each other at the center.



One player is designated as the leader and when the coach says “go” the leader must shuffle (side to side) to either of the cones. The other player must try to beat the leader to the cone and touch it before the leader. Once the leader starts, he can not change directions.



Each keeper would get 5 turns as the leader.

Next, do the same but this time the leader can change directions. This makes it very difficult since as soon as the follower takes a lead, the leader can change directions and go in the other direction. This is a hard but short activity that really challenges the keepers to work hard.

An alternative is to simply turn this into a race. Instead of their being a leader, the coach calls out which cone to go to and then both keepers slide as fast as they can to that cone. In this case, it's not necessarily the fastest player winning as it also involves making a decision as to which cone was called and reacting accordingly.

Give this activity a try and you might be surprised how hard the keepers work and how challenging it is for them.

The Multi-Skilled Coach: Knowing the Brain

By Anthony Hudson

I worked with an Under-10 team recently and in our first session, I pulled aside a player who was playing right back. I noticed that the whole time he was in the game he never left his little “self-made” area, which allowed him to move only three or four yards in any direction, regardless of where the ball was and what was happening in the game.

“Andrew, what do we want to do when we get the ball?”

“Um, pass, combine?”

“Yeah, pass, combine, but what else do we want to do?”

“Um... score a goal!”

“Yes, score a goal. So, when you get the ball, wouldn't you like to go and score?”

“Yes but, I'm not allowed to go up there!”

I was shocked, and since then I haven't stopped thinking about it. Somewhere along the line this youngster has learned that first he is a defender, and second, as a defender, he was not allowed to go forward. What a crying shame! How many more young players have these restrictions put on them, and how are they able to enjoy and express themselves under such conditions?

As coaches we wield a huge amount of influence over the players we work with, whether young or old. And to aid us we have so many resources for learning at our disposal!

Is it merely enough to learn and practice the technical and tactical side of the game? There's no question those aspects are important, but what if we can't communicate effectively what we want? What if we can't read our players? Is what we are seeing and hearing really what's going on? Do we know how to truly listen to them? What good is all this technical and tactical knowledge if we can't help our players?

THE MULTI-SKILLED COACH

Just as cross training is invaluable to any particular sport that someone participates in, the same type of “cross-training” is true with coaching. As coaches we must constantly seek to become much more “multi-skilled.” Working and learning in areas such as psychology, physiology, nutrition, human development, learning languages, fitness, self development, mentoring and counseling are subjects that can aid us in becoming a more effective influence on our players. All these factors that influence our coaching environment are so interesting and enjoyable to experience – the many joys of being a coach.

THE BRAIN AND HOW PEOPLE LEARN

We know that people learn in many different ways. Some are more visually oriented, others learn best by hearing, some by feeling and doing. For example, one player may be able to do exactly what you're asking the first time, but another may need to see it performed a few times first before giving it a go.

The brain is absolutely amazing, and in a learning, coaching environment it is hugely underestimated. We can gain so much insight about the brain and in particular how players learn. Study of the conscious and unconscious mind can go a long way in helping us become more effective coaches. Dr. Emile Donchin (University of Illinois) says “99 percent of all learning is non-conscious. Your students are learning without knowing it.” So that means that what we do, how we speak, what we say, how we dress, our body language, our facial expressions, the environment, the posters we put on the wall, the affirmations, the diagrams – all of these things affect what players learn...without them being aware of it.

When I'm making a coaching point or a team talk to my players, I may think what I'm saying sounds effective and constructive, but some players may not even be listening. They're focused on my body language or the expression on my face, reacting to the tone of my voice or noticing the other players, their expressions and what they are thinking. Their unconscious mind is feeding off and taking in all that I am doing.

Are we aware of all the factors that can influence our players' state of learning? Do we know how these factors can help us teach more effectively? Are we doing enough to affect these variables and to try and accommodate the players' different learning styles?