‘Key Features of Elite Young Player Development in Europe’- what relevance to North America?

March 2007
US Youth Soccer
HOW IS GOOD PRACTICE IN ELITE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ASSESSED?

IN EUROPE

- Players into the first team of a professional Club?
- Winning Tournaments?

IN NORTH AMERICA YOUTH TOURNAMENTS

- Winning Tournaments?
- Players into ODP?
- Players achieving College Scholarships?
- Players into Professional /Semi-Professional Soccer?
- Others?
TOURNAMENTS?

• France have developed more high quality players than any other European Country but
  -have never been in the top 3 in the FIFA Under 20 Tournament
  -have only qualified twice since 1997

• 2004 UEFA Burlaz Trophy for combined team performances at Under 17 & 19: Spain (1), England (2)
  -never won a major tournament at Senior Level outside their own country
STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT?

- UNDER 10- “age of fun”.
- UNDER 12- “age of technique”.
- UNDER 14- “age of understanding”.
- UNDER 16- “age of competitive match play”.
- UNDER 19- “age of professional preparation”.

LIVERPOOL F.C.
HOW IS GOOD PRACTICE IN ELITE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ASSESSED?

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- Others?
KEY FACTORS IN GOOD PRACTICE FOR ELITE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1. Finding *TALENT*
2. Maximising *TIME*
3. Good *TEACHERS and TEACHING*
4. Effective *PROGRAMS*
5. Sensible *PROFILING*
6. Marshalling *PARENT* power
What to look for?

- TIPS (Ajax): Talent, Intelligence, Personality, Speed
- TABS (L’vpool): Technical, Attitude, Balance, Speed
- SUPS : Speed, Understanding, Personality, Skill
- PAS : Pace, Attitude, Skill

Beware of: ‘he/she really really looks like a player’ !!!!
THE 4 CORNERS AND THE AGES HAVE A CHANGING EFFECT AND IMPACT OVER TIME
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE - PHYSICAL:

Find the early birthdays!

- Turkey won the 2005 UEFA Under 17 Championship in 2005: Qualification Date (January 1st)
  - 50% of the squad were born in the first 3 months of the qualification date
  - 10% were born in the last 3 months of the qualification date (Oct-December)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First 3 Months</th>
<th>First 6 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cz</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Star Team ( + effect)</td>
<td>50% (30% in Jan)</td>
<td>90% - none in last 3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all 72 Squad players only 2 from last 3 months and only one of these LATZA (Ger) played a full game
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE – PHYSICAL

Select the tallest & biggest!
FIFA UNDER 17 WORLD CUP 2005 (male-ex.. Australia !)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Av Squad Height</th>
<th>Av Squad Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Italy 1.82m</td>
<td>Brasil 74.2kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Brasil 1.80m</td>
<td>Uruguay 74.9kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Turkey 1.79m</td>
<td>Holland 72.4kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Holland 1.75m</td>
<td>Peru 72.2kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ivory Coast 1.75m</td>
<td>Turkey 72.3kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mexico 1.74m</td>
<td>Mexico 70.1kg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare these with the average 16/17 year old and Compare with your players

PS:
- USA had the smallest average height! (1.69m)
- Mexico won the tournament -19/20 born in first 6 months (95%) -55% in first 3 months: 0 players born in last 3 months
- Brasil 70% first 6 months: 1 player in last 3 months

Do you maintain weigh and measure your players?
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE –PHYSIOLOGICAL

15-17 yr olds –successful v unsuccessful:

Predictors for those players to be selected by top clubs in Germany, Italy, England and Croatia

(Reilly, Bangsbo & Franks 2000 and Jankovic 1997)

• Max oxygen uptake (V02 max)
• Anaerobic Power: 10/20 m sprints
• Trunk strength

What fitness tests do you use?
Do you record and archive the results to assist profiling?
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE –TECHNIQUE TESTS

SOCCER STAR

6 skills tests for 6-16 year olds, now available (free!) on the web (fasoccerstar.com)
over 1 million children worldwide since 1989

Running with the ball, Turning, Dribbling, Speed, Shooting & Heading

No date of birth bias in results-High correlation (90%) with subjective assessment of
players 1-6 star ratings: 6 Star represents top 3%

Current FAPL players who recorded 6 star rating when 9yrs of age:
  - Michael Carrick, Michael Bridges, Mathew Etherington

AJAX
Shooting, Speed and Heading Tests

DFB Test

UKRAINE SCHOOL TESTS

Do you have your own tests – archived and cross referenced against
game performance?
ENGLAND YOUTH TEAMS

PLAYER ASSESSMENT FORM

PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDE
Is he a team player, a winner (quiet or loud), coachable, a leader?
Does he have a positive influence on other players?

INTELLIGENCE
Does he understand his role, the game?
Does he read the game well? Can he adapt?

TECHNIQUE
Can he cope technically with the demands of position?
Does he have any outstanding technical strengths or weaknesses?

SPEED
Is he very quick? If so, over what distances?
Is he slow?
Does he have a change of pace?
What are his qualities relative to his position?

FITNESS
Can he last a game?
Is he strong, powerful, weak?
Effectiveness
Does he affect the game? Is so, how?

RECOMMEND GRADE
A   Recommend
B   To be viewed again
C   Not up to standard
THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION – YOUTH PLAYER ASSESSMENT

NAME: _____________________  DATE OF BIRTH: _______________  AGE GROUP: ________

CLUB: ____________________  POSITION: _____________________

MATCH: _____________________  MATCH AGE GROUP: ________________

MATCH DATE: ________________

ASSESSMENT

SCORE ON SCALE OF 1 (VERY POOR) 2 (POOR) 3 (AVERAGE) 4 (GOOD) 5 (EXCELLENT)

PERSONALITY AND ATTITUDE

Is he:-  Tough-minded  Confident  Focused  Enthusiastic  Composed  Takes Responsibility

INTELLIGENCE

How well does he understand his role?  How well does he read the game?  Does he make good decisions?

TECHNIQUE

How well does he cope technically with the demands of his position?  How good is his range of techniques?

SPEED

How quick is he?  Does he have a change of pace?

FITNESS

How well does he compete physically?  How well is he equipped physically?  How well does he last the game?

EFFECTIVENESS

To what extent does he effect the game?

ANY OTHER COMMENTS (e.g. left or right footed)

SUMMARY

Strengths

Weaknesses

Total Score

Recommended Grade

A = 68 and above
B = 60-67
C = below 60

A = Recommended
B = To be viewed again
C = Not up to standard

COMPLETED BY ________________________________________

SIGNED ______________________________  DATE ________________
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING
PERFORMERS AT
16-18 YEARS OF AGE- Game Related KPI’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Brasil 1994 (7)</th>
<th>Man.Utd 2006 (9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Av goals per game FOR</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strikes at goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av Strikes at Goal per game</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av Strikes/goal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entries into Attacking third –with ball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av No. of entries &gt; A 1/3 per game</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av No. of entries/ Strike at goal</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av No. of entries/Goal</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What are your team’s KPI’s and who contributes to them?- practical examples?
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING *PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE*

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE – GAME RELATED KPI’s

- ENTRIES INTO THE ATTACKING THIRD: STOPPING THEM V DELIVERING THEM
  - Pass/Dribble/Run with and without the ball v stopping/track them!
  - Exploiting Turnovers v Smothering turnovers

- STRIKES AT GOAL IN THE ATTACKING THIRD: STOPPING THEM V CREATING THEM
  - Set Play winning or conceding
  - Set play delivery /execution v defending against them
  - Dribbling/Crosses/Thru Passes/Long Shots v defending against these
  - Re-gain the ball v avoids re-possession

- THE FIRST GOAL
  - Their value in creating v stopping it

CAN YOU PROFILE & ARCHIVE YOUR BEST PLAYERS FOR POSTERITY?
GOOD PRACTICE = DEVELOPING PERFORMERS AT 16-18 YEARS OF AGE

TALENT IDENTIFICATION-SELECT WHAT’S MEASURABLE –WHERE ARE THEY?

- Nursery clubs or affiliates- Real Madrid (200) AC Milan (100)
- Joint Schemes- FC Twente and Heracles
- Community /grassroots schemes- UK, Werder Bremen, FC Koln
- Try-outs v On-going Assessments
- Schools?

*What are the common geographic/demographic characteristics of your players?*
TIME – 10 years or 10,000 hours to be a pro

Schooling- getting more from curriculum time
- All in one school- KRYLIA SOVETOV, AC Milan, Rosenborg
- Liaise with 4/5 schools – Bayern Munich

Bussing
- Ajax (16 Minibuses)

Sleeping- Residential
- AC Milan and Real Madrid from 14 years of age
- KRYLIA SOVETOV
- Warder Bremen /Bayer Munich
- Ajax – opposed to ‘Hostels’

Sessions per week
- Under 11yrs : 2 + 1 game
- 12-14: 3 + 1 game
- 15-16 : 4/5 + 1 game
- 17-19 : 7+ 1 game

Can you encourage your players to maintain personal practice diaries?
KRYLIA SOVETOV-six players in Russian European Champi Squad

- A private football school founded in 1999 by Yury Konoplev, a businessman
- It is located not far from Samara, in Primorskiy settlement.
- 6 training pitches (3 of them are 3rd generation artificial with the turf) facilities for playing football indoor, rehabilitation and medical centre, gym, entertainment facilities including mini-cinema, etc.
- About 150 football players live there full board (from 11 years)
- Coaching and Selection involve about 1000 players per year
- Children from different regions are attracted.
- Education is free
- In May 2005 there was signed a long term agreement between "Lada" sports school and the Football Club of the Premier league "Krylia Sovetov" and the school became a part of the club's infrastructure and acquired the brand "Krylia Sovetov".
TEACHERS AND TEACHING

- Federation Qualifications – industry norm: big step forward
- UEFA Youth Coaches Certificate
- Specialised Coaches- GK, technique, defense
- Danish FA – individual coaches embedded in clubs: results?
- Use of ex-players – Real Madrid one session every two weeks in positional groups + an exlayer in that position

*Could you use older players (College players) to ‘coach’ younger players in their position?*

- Grading of Academies in Holland

*Could State Associations do the same in the USA?*
PROGRAMS


‘Amount of time spent in soccer specific coach led INDIVIDUAL practice was the strongest predictor of skill pre 14 years of age: after 14 years it was the amount of time spent in coach led TEAM practice’

Check List for you: Specific Characteristics of Practice-

- RANDOM-practice involving different skills vs BLOCKED involving one skill
- VARIABLE – variety of skills outcomes vs CONSTANT practice of same skill
- DISTRIBUTED-practice time less than rest time vs MASSED
- TRANSFERABLE – involving decision making

CASE STUDIES

- Personal Responsibility Individual Player Diaries :: Danish FA -Use of Intranet- and Rosenborg
- Feedback/Reporting (Ajax increased theirs)
- Use of Futsal?
- Practices- same as you do!!
Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring

Feedback on your own players…..2,3,or 4 times a year
Or ( Crewe Alexander FC Academy) ….once a week !

• Report
• Discussion
• Goal Setting

Rosenborg : a simple SWOT Analysis + Agreed Action Plan
Most successful Academies are stable and patient :they give players longer to develop
SENSIBLE PROFILING

AJAX

- Select a ‘squad’ of players – equal number right and left footed
- Introduce 11v11 by 11 years & ‘Schooled’ to play in one (or more) of the Ajax 1-4-3-3 system

ROSENBORG

- 23 Attacking moves to learn for the ‘Rosenborg’ 4-3-3

REAL MADRID.
All the Youth Teams play a 1-4-3-3 and 1-4-4-2 system with one holding defensive mid-field player:

- At what age do you profile your players?
- What is your criteria?
- Is it written down and recorded?
- Are the coaches, players and parents aware of the profile
# Tottenham Hotspur Football Club
## Player Profiling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Tactical</th>
<th>Mental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal Keeper #1</td>
<td>6'2&quot;</td>
<td>Shot Stopping</td>
<td>Resilient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agile</td>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Back #2,#3</td>
<td>Agile</td>
<td>1v1 Defending</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% Defender</td>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>Defending Far Post</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed-Endurance</td>
<td>Defensive Support Play</td>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre Half #5,#6</td>
<td>6'1&quot;</td>
<td>1v1 Defending</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% Defender</td>
<td>Agile</td>
<td>Heading</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>Alert in possession</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive Support Play</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 solid passing options</td>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>Agile</td>
<td>Tight Receiving Skills</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% Defender</td>
<td>Quick</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>360 Range Passing</td>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed Endurance</td>
<td>Support Play</td>
<td>Bravery on ball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation Space</td>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heading</td>
<td>Screen Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking Up Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Mental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midfield #8</td>
<td>Endurance 14K</td>
<td>Tight Receiving Skills</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% Defender</td>
<td>Speed Endurance</td>
<td>7 Passes</td>
<td>Brave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>RWTB</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
<td>Resilient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking Runs</td>
<td>Tackling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defensive Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midfield #10</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Perception &amp; Intelligence</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30% Defender</td>
<td>Speed Endurance</td>
<td>Tight &amp; Disguised rec/turning</td>
<td>Risk Taker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% Attacker</td>
<td>RWTB</td>
<td>Extrovert ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Winner</td>
<td>Dribbling</td>
<td>Quick Minded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% Defender</td>
<td>Sharp</td>
<td>Perception &amp; Intelligence</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacker 75%</td>
<td>Speed Endurance</td>
<td>Recv Skills - Back to goal</td>
<td>Selfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>- Behind</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace</td>
<td>RWTB / Dribbling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Creation In &amp; Out Box</td>
<td>Heading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Play</td>
<td>Usher one direction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Play Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward #9</td>
<td>6'</td>
<td>Perception / Awareness</td>
<td>Big Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20% Defender</td>
<td>Strong Runner</td>
<td>Recv Skills - Back to goal</td>
<td>Selfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>- Behind</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Pace</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Play Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward #11</td>
<td>25% Defender</td>
<td>Pace</td>
<td>Recv skills - In front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% Attacker</td>
<td>Agility</td>
<td>- Behind</td>
<td>Concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed Endurance</td>
<td>Turning</td>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace Creator</td>
<td>RWTB / Dribbling</td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When, Where, How use space</td>
<td>Combination play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Play Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFC Ajax

- Select a ‘squad’ of players – equal number right and left footed
- Introduce 11v11 by 11 years
- ‘Schooled’ to play in one (or more) of the Ajax 1-4-3-3 system
- Players therefore profiled

At what age do you profile your players?

What is your criteria?

Is it written down and recorded?

Are the scouts and coaches aware of the profile?
Are the players aware of the profile?
MARSHALLING PARENT POWER- parents and coaches on the same page

Ajax, AC Milan, B. Munich, Real Madrid ….’Parents!’

Club Guidelines for parents (Real Madrid) How to be a better Soccer Parent –not coach

- Choosing an’ Elite’ Club
- Realistic Goals and Expectations
- Providing Feedback
- Communication Channels
- A Balanced Life-Style
- Managing Disappointment
- Managing Success- for the moment!
SPORTS PATH ™ PARENTAL COURSES

- The Task
  - Providing a real life problem for the learner to work through and deal with
  - Courses encourage the learner to find the solutions for themselves
SPORTS PATH™ PARENTAL COURSES

- The Help

E-Coach provides technical information including the following aspects:
  - Recommended practices
  - Backyard games
  - Skill challenges
  - Skill tips

Online Knowledge provides factual information and results from case studies including the following aspects:
  - Codes of conduct
  - Health
  - Diet
  - Fitness
WHAT ABOUT THOSE ‘POTENTIAL ‘ PLAYERS?
-Late birthdays?
-Late growers?
-Their expertise is not as easily measured?
-Socially or Psychologically challenged?

- How do you identify their potential?
- How do you assist their development?
- How can provide compensatory programs?
- Balancing Potentials with Performers?
- How can you specialise in attracting this group?
THE 4 CORNERS AND THE AGES HAVE A CHANGING EFFECT AND IMPACT OVER TIME
Psychological

- Stable Extroverts (Kane 1970)
- **Good Learners**
- Game Intelligence
- Decision Making
- Concentration
- Confidence
- Composure
- Commitment
- Mental Control
- Academic Intelligence (School Performance) ? V Poor Reading Skills ?
Social

- Values
- Beliefs
- Parental Support
- Role Models
- Cultural /Community Support
- Socio-economic background

FC Rosenborg
- 13 consecutive Norwegian Titles
- UCL Champions League

believe their USP is Psycho-Social
Two Case Studies

15 years
4 months old

15 years
5 months old

• What are the likely benefits and threats to each player’s development?
• How Can they be challenged in the Same Practice?
Bio-Banding

• Matching formula for opposed situations -
  height x weight divided by 1000 = group
  e.g. 160 cm x 50 kg divided by 1000 = 8.0 = Group 8

This player is allocated to Group 8. Players should play in small-sided games and be coached in opposed group practices with other players across a 2 group band (e.g. players in group 8 practice daily with players in groups 7, 8 and 9.

• Early v Late Maturers affect both players and also in more than just Physical
Environmental Tool Box to accommodate Early and Late Maturers

- Specific Groups
- Specific Tournaments?
- Other Suggestions