COACHING FROM THE GAME

Using Coaching Tools to Facilitate Learning the Principles of Play

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• Why is soccer the most popular team sport in the world?
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• It is the only sport where the players express who they are through their play.
  – Their culture
  – Their personality
  – Their own way to solve problems
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• At all levels of play – but especially at the highest level – soccer is about the abilities and the decisions of the players themselves.
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• What makes an effective soccer coach?
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• Ability to “read the game” and focus within the chaotic flow of play – understanding technical vs tactical issues.
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• Ability to create realistic problems and “guide,” not choreograph or coerce players into making their own decisions, with the patience to “allow” them to experiment and solve the problems of the game.
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• Ability to provide a practice environment where the principles of the game dictate the decisions – an environment that is “player-centered,” not “coach-centered.”
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- Ability and patience to use “guided discovery."
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• Ability to use the proper “coaching tools” to emphasize certain principles of play and help players learn to play within the context of the game.
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• Just as a carpenter would not use a hammer to cut wood, coaches must be aware of how the tools they use shape the environment for the players.
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• Generally, the game can be replicated to great effect using small-sided games.
  – More repetitions in game-like environments
  – More opportunities to play on both sides of the ball.
  – Fewer opportunities to pass the responsibility.
Examples of Coaching tools

- Warm-up for dribbling
- Incentives v. Restrictions
- Delineated Areas of the Field
- Unequal Numbers – where an how used
Examples of Coaching Tools

• Size and Shape of Field
• Types, Placement and Numbers of Goals
• Touches
• Different Directions
• Different Color Vests
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• Questions?