

THE ROLE OF TECHNIQUES AND INDIVIDUAL SKILLS IN SHAPING AN YOUNG FOOTBALL TEAMS

Cătălin SAVU, Gabriel MANOLACHE

„Dunărea de Jos” University of Galati, Romania

Abstract

The successful teams were built around a individual skills players, a well-drilled system in addition, they all had a well-organised defence that still gave the players the freedom to express themselves and use their own strengths while pushing forward. In elite level soccer, “winning” is the central theme, preferable in an attractive style. Important ingredients are a clear vision of your game strategy, soccer specific team building, and guided scouting. Training and coaching are critical elements to become successful. Such players have football brains, are quick to read the game and can outfox the opposition defence with an outstanding piece of individual skill.

Key words: *individual skill, technique with the ball, soccer, elite level.*

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that the primary assets of any football club are the players. They are the capital assets of the club, the goods they can exchange to get other assets. Football clubs, as opposed to most other institutions, have the enormous capacity of searching for and building up these assets, turning them into cherished sums of money that accrue in the form of capital.

A club with good players is very liable to be closer to achieving success at sports – and is also likely to get a larger amount of offers from companies willing to jump onto the bandwagon of this success.

There are several lines of reasoning and deductions that can be derived from this, however, when considered from a more specific point of view, the player's sporting technique, in other words, his coordination skill applied to this sport, is of superlative value.

While technical quality is one of the various resources available to player during the competition, it is worth noting he will be more highly valued and sought after the more closely associated he is to defining results.

The coach, through the position and influence he owns, contributes decisively to the formation and shaping of a child's system of values. Actually, there are a few situations in which a player who reached maturity makes public the names of their first coaches from when they were juniors, extolling their merits for achieving their personal success. It all goes down to the interest and the art shown by each coach. The job of a coach for the juvenile section has, by its particularity, a certain character. Although it seems to be easier and to lack responsibility, it implies in fact a series of risks, taking into account that the beginning of football at a very young age is fundamental for the preparation in this sport.

These risks are tightly connected to the nature of data and information provided by the coaches, by the validation of the training, by the way in which this information is assimilated and the way it is put into practice. These could have positive effects on the career of a future football player, facilitating his possibility of achieving success, or, on the contrary, when they are not valid or in conformity with the actual necessities, they might represent an impediment in the way towards performance. Therefore, it can be stated that by nature of long term effects, the job of a coach for children and juniors (mentioning that there also exists the job of teacher trainer), might imply even more risks and responsibilities than that of a coach for seniors.

By looking at these things from this perspective, we have to bear in mind the fact that at the age of childhood, especially in its first stage, the behaviour of a child presents a series of particular features, which differentiate his way of acting from that of a senior. Thus, at the age of 5-6, which sometimes relates to the first encounter with football, a child mainly shows agility, intelligence and reticence in embarrassing situations. In spite of all appearances, the field of attention is dominated by a profound understanding of a situation. The interest for a game, typical for that age, is the source of numerous activities which are incorporated in games. A game overflows a child's personality.

Between the age of 9 and 10 there takes place an obvious growth in the means of evaluating a child, the critic sense developing in the same way.

The adolescent age – between 10 and 18 – which is the final period of secondary school, following junior school, represents the second part of an individual's life, the transition to maturity and to becoming part of a society. The family and school guardianship gradually modify. The main

part of the entire phase is the intense development of personality.

The fundamental type of activity is still teaching and instruction, in theory and in practice, including the preparation for the right accomplishment of a productive professional activity.

Therefore, we bear in mind three essential aspects when working with children. If at the pre-school age the main type of activity is the game, when in primary school, learning becomes more important, whereas for an adolescent the main preoccupation is standing up for himself and his personality as a member of a social group. Every coach, teacher or instructor must know that they can decisively contribute to the formation and development of a child as a future football player and that in order to do that they must possess certain essential psychological features. Other features of the modern game is:

Creativity-to break down compact defences in modern football, teams are increasingly turning to players who: can dribble, can catch opponents off guard and sell dummies, excel in one-on-one situations, can dribble their way into the oppositions penalty area before shooting, can read the game well to make a darting run or to play a quick pass to bring their team-mates into play.

Intelligent defending around the team's own penalty area- successful teams try to defend to their own penalty area without conceding "stupid" or "unnecessary" fouls. This has become a particularly important tactic as every single team now has at least one free-kick specialist. The same holds true for corner kicks as teams now have a whole range of intricate corner-kick routines. The Dutch, for instance, scored their second goal in their quarter-final against Brazil from well-rehearsed corner kick. Kuyt flicking the ball on for Sneijder to head home from deep in the penalty area. No sliding in- players who slide in only put their own team at risk, defenders need to stay on their feet and try to win the ball back with controlled aggression without clattering into opponents.

Early pressing and quick transitions- to prevent counter-attacks- in other words, "countering counter-attacks"(usually with two lines of players).

Active defending and flexibility between the various defensive lines-defence and midfield, variety in defensive play, sometimes with zonal marking and sometimes man-to-man marking in the defensive lines. A new tactical and technical dimension of the game, now, is the recovery the ball-it reveals, therefore, a change of attitude of defense, a transition from recovery offered by initiative forwards, defenders recovery caused by the initiative.

Recovery, complex action, achieved through a rigorous organization of the preparatory phase, including various means of implementation, some of which are of preparative, such as reply, replacements, marking and pressing other, one, owner, like interception and dispossession.

This trend will probably become even more pronounced in the years to come as it will ensure that successful coaches have a "new" tactical weapon up their sleeves depending on how the match is progressing.

Technique and aggression-flow of play and healthy aggression, the team that were particularly successful were those with excellent technique and passing. They also worked hard to regain possession after losing the ball, showing a high level of aggression. Argentina did not do this during their quarter-final against Germany, for example-good technique and a healthy level of aggression are therefore key factors.

Excellent passers are a key commodity in modern football-all successful teams have one or two excellent passers in their ranks. Their role is to provide their attackers or team-mates with perfectly timed passes. Outstanding players such as Sneijder, Xavi, Iniesta and Ozil are all capable of this, but they are also able to play balls in behind opposition defences.

Ability to create and exploit depth-modern football is about finding space and gaps and then playing successful balls into these area. Top-class attackers such as Villa, Messi and Ozil all possess this skill.

Passing while on the move and making perfectly timed passes-this ensures that team-mates are faced with a one-on-one situation instead of being outnumbered three to one. One such example is a diagonal ball that reaches a team-mate at the perfect time so as to give him a one-on-one situation. If this diagonal pass is not played at precisely the right moment, the team-mate will be put under pressure and outnumbered by opponents.

Sporting technique is far from plentiful nowadays. The reasons for this are varied and I shall not stop to analyse them in depth. I would like to mention, though, that for our children today, football as a game is simply one of so many options on the extensive menu provided by the leisure activities industry. It should not be forgotten that sports techniques are a capacity born and developed by exercising, and the time during childhood not devoted to practising sport, at an age when there is still time to instil this skill, can never be recovered. At the age of 30 a person can learn and even improve their sports techniques. There is no doubt of this. It is just that by that time the age for becoming a professional football player has gone for good. Football technique takes a great deal of dedication. Years, days, hour upon hour. And the more hours devoted to it, the more probabilities they will have of acquiring greater technical

expertise. The truth is, nothing is acquired by mere spontaneity.

Culture and values of a society, the singularity of each history created in the heart of the family, and the game as the motivating force in the learning process, are elements to some extent responsible for the attainment of a technique for excellence consecrated as a virtue in elite players.

Education in playing with the influences created in the child's social and family environment, the game is another of the features that contribute decisively to practising and developing the technique.

I believe any educational endeavour seeking to be successful should include playing as a teaching tool. Playing is the setting par excellence in which a child unknowingly exercises this skill. To him playing is simply playing.

I once heard a teacher say: when a child is a child he has to play. His world is centred on playing. If, for instance, a trainer is in charge of a group of 8-year olds who want to be football players, and during one of the classes he gets them to run for 20 minutes to train them, it is because he believes he is gaining time in this way.

The boys will no doubt do it because they, in turn, believe this is the way to become better football players. And, the truth is, these boys will be doing no harm to their health because of the physical duress, even though the training may feel hard.

What could be detrimental to them, though, is the time wasted doing things that have no value at all at that age. Absolutely none. Not even value for the future.

What can never be recovered is the time wasted that could have been devoted to developing their coordination skills, which are intimately linked to technique.

It would be worthwhile asking how valuable it would be at this age to devote part of their training time to developing conditional skills such as resistance or strength when these are already being exercised with activities that stimulate the child's general or specific coordination.

Just as a pianist or a ballet dancer exercises his or her playing technique from a very early age and over many years, for a football player, the command of the game and the final quality of the technique will be the result of the greater or lesser quality or quantity of stimuli his coordination skills have received throughout his life, and most particularly during his childhood.

Of course nobody can deny there are people who have a natural gift and are more inclined towards acquiring a more refined technique.

Certain genetic biotypes contribute to some extent, but only up to a point. Natural

predisposition on its own is unable to build anything.

It is the stimulation and exercising of this predisposition that optimises and contributes to building up this capacity until it is transformed into a virtue.

The same thing happens with the larger or smaller amount of fast fibres that mark the speed of an athlete. The larger amount of fast fibres is a direct result of a child's early stimulation.

When I refer most specially to childhood, it is because this is the time when the psychic system experiences the most avid need to incorporate information, the most avid need to configure a body structure of its own.

The information the system stores in its memory is provided by bodily experience with the world, and the experiences that will take up a privileged place in a person's memory will surely be those that were primarily recorded there.

What is first recorded in a person's mind is much more likely to create a habit in that person. In countries where social planning is a reality and sports have a sense of their own and aim at providing recreation and pleasure in the overall formation of the inhabitants, it is very likely children's choice of sport will take place at the most appropriate time.

By the age of 6, boys are already training and playing formally in neighbourhood club teams competing in very high voltage infant leagues given their young age. In this environment, children learn, and any inexperience and naiveté is toughened in trial-by-fire. Both the good and the bad they get from professional football rubs off on them and becomes part of them. It is here these incipient footballers are also subjected to the first signs of the inordinate pressure of having to win.

Undoubtedly the instructor should seek to create the largest number possible of occurrences to stimulate the skills in coordination specifically required for this sport, recreating and updating their body structure as regards time-space-object topics.

When this child reaches the age of 15, his sports technique should already have been acquired. The time for exclusiveness is over. By the age of 15, technique will be sharing the field with the development of conditional capacities such as strength, resistance, speed and muscular flexibility. To make an analogy, the same thing happens with people as with their skill for the game.

People cannot play beyond a certain age – not because they do not have the ability but because the time they have available is devoted to other things. Once responsibilities come along, work takes on more importance and the game is left aside. In a similar manner, skills are also gradually lost. The same thing happens with the skills for coordination: the closer one gets to highly competitive circles, the longer are the times and

loads devoted to strength, resistance, speed, flexibility or tactical moves, and less those devoted to sporting techniques. Those able to perceive the decisive nature of these facts will be better able to anticipate them and win extremely valuable hours off their childhood days. Precisely because it is this childhood that holds an amount of gold that could hardly be held in both hands.

In conclusion, each phase has specific characteristic and specifies the role of each player. Technical, tactical, physical and mental (TTPM) requirements can be defined according to game plan, position of the player and the main phase of the game.

Basically the training exercises consist of small sided games, passing exercises, position specific system exercises, position play, tactical position play up to 11 vs. 11, individual training, athletic ability and power training, sprint power and capacity training. Each training exercise has been

analyzed in terms of physical training load and technical / tactical purpose in relation to game demands.

The intensity, load density and/or complexity of many training session are above the game requirements. Intensive measurements of each training session and match give us a clear picture of the physical capabilities of our players. Science and innovations are important domains to create and keep the winning edge in elite sport.

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