



COACHING EDUCATION MONTHLY

A monthly newsletter for Coaching Education Directors of towns and clubs in Massachusetts...please forward to the coaches within your organization.

Welcome to the March 2004 issue of *Coaching Education Monthly*. This publication is a monthly newsletter initiated by the Development Staff of Mass Youth Soccer. Each month, we will send out, via email, notes on; "what's kickin" in coaching development in Massachusetts, editorials on coaching books and videos, some quotes from famous coaches, and a sample training session for you to try with your team and/or another soccer related article. If you are interested in submitting articles of your own for publication, please contact Andy Nelson at anelson@mayouthsoccer.org or 978-870-7527.

We hope you enjoy the first 2004 edition of *Coaching Education Monthly*....

INSIDE THIS EDITION...

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- <http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/calendar.html>

- <http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/courseschedule.html>
 - <http://www.mayouthsoccer.org/othercoachevents.html>
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QUOTES FROM THE ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE (EPL)

Kevin Keegan commenting on an amazing comeback.....

Manchester City boss Kevin Keegan after watching his side go 3-0 down at half time, with 10 men, against Spurs in the FA Cup...

“At half-time I turned to Faz and said "Where's the nearest job center?"”

Keegan after watching his side turn it around to win 4-3...

“I've told the players that people will still be watching that match when we're all six feet under...or cremated...or whatever we intend to do with ourselves.”

QPR boss Ian Holloway after their Division Two game with Notts County...

“We need a big, ugly defender. If we had one of them we'd have dealt with County's first goal by taking out the ball, the player, and the first three rows of seats in the stands!”

Alan Hansen talking about Arsenal's RECENT demolition of Portsmouth...

“Their style is also so adaptable, aided by the burning pace of Thierry Henry. We can rightly say that their style is to play it into feet, but six times in the first half at Portsmouth they looked for Henry over the top and nearly got him in. It is a defender's nightmare.”

Sir Bobby Robson looking back on the evolution of the game...

“I was 17 when I joined Fulham. A lot of our training was without the ball: stamina and endurance for 90 minutes on heavy pitches with the old leather footballs, that's what it was all about. Nowadays you can count 40 footballs on the pitch at training.” -*Soccer America, March 8, 2004*

John Harkes on his own player development...

“His development was accelerated by watching games, both live and on television, from around the world.” -*Soccer America, March 8, 2004*

Soccer Camps – Make the Right Choice

With the enormous variety of soccer camps offered each summer, which is the best for your child? Choosing a good camp for your child is a big and tough decision. So what key qualities should you look for in a summer camp? For young players from six to twelve, you want a camp that offers **FUN, FUN, FUN!** Preferably, the camp coaches should also have a Youth Coaching license from US Youth Soccer, the National Soccer Coaches Association of America or perhaps a foreign license. Also, an added, but not necessary, benefit is a coaching staff with teaching experience. At this stage of your child's/players' development, they need a camp that will let them discover the game in a **FUN** learning environment that stresses technical (ball mastery) development. A good ratio of campers to staff is 1 to 8 and no more than 1 to 12. A half day camp is adequate for this age group; although, there are *some* 12 year olds that can adapt very well to the rigors of a full day camp or even an overnight camp.

An overnight camp should be considered for players 12 and older. There are many overnight camps within/outside Massachusetts that have excellent curriculums and are well staffed. This kind of camp takes a lot out of players, because of the amount of physical activity they are involved in on a daily basis (usually three field sessions a day). An overnight camp should still stress the technical (ball mastery) aspect of the game, but now should introduce the area of tactical development (making soccer decisions). Once again, you should look at the staff and the type of learning environment they create for the players. Other questions you should ask are: Does the staff know our culture or are they from a different country? Are the main staff seasoned coaches or college players? What license do they hold? Head Staff coaches should have USSF or UEFA "A", "B" or "C" Licenses or NSCAA Premier, Advanced National or National Licenses. Assistants should preferably have a USSF "D", FA Preliminary Badge or an NSCAA Regional Diploma. Once again, the ratio of coaches to players should be a concern, but the numbers can be larger per coach at these ages. Athletic training staff and emergency procedures should be available and pre-organized. It is also important to find the right "level" of camp for your child. When a camp says "Advanced" it usually means club level players, top town level players, and above. After considering these questions and standards, and you still are hesitant whether you are picking the right camp, contact someone that has attended that camp in the past to see how they enjoyed it. Good luck, and have a great summer camp season!

If your town or team is looking for a fun camp that has all the important camp qualities discussed above, Mass Youth Soccer is willing to put on a camp in your area!

For more information about Mass Youth Soccer Camps contact
Tara Pierce at tpierce@mayouthsoccer.org or call her at 800-852-8111 x
225.

COACHING TIPS TO KEEP YOUR TEAM FOCUSED AT PRACTICE

If you have a young team that is particularly difficult to keep on task, it can be frustrating. Try some of the following suggestions:

- 1) Begin by having your cones and equipment in position before the team arrives.
- 2) Your assistant/s (if you don't have one, it is up to you) should have a challenging activity, that the players enjoy, going as soon as the first players roll in. Make it an activity that can add players easily, but keeps the focus of the group.
- 3) At some point in practice try to talk to each player about something other than soccer.
- 4) Shorten up practice in order to make it more intense and focused.
- 5) Try not to stay on a topic for too long. With under 12's teach techniques in 2 minute bursts. Tell them "they have 30 seconds to work on this skill." Then you can go 30-60 seconds, and repeat. Also, you can tell them, "You are looking for the player or two that is best doing this new skill". Then use that player as a demonstrator. Make sure to spread this role around. A little round of applause by the team is appropriate when a player has shown their skill to the team.
- 6) Keep explanations short. Just give the players enough information to get the exercise going successfully, and make adjustments when the ball goes dead. You should only need 15-30 seconds to explain an exercise. "First team to get the ball in play gets possession" usually gets the players sprinting into position.
- 7) Make it competitive, but don't harp on winners and losers. Have each player try to beat their own previous best score. Juggle and catch equals one point is a very easy way to begin juggling, and there are many variations from there. Try to make every technical game you play have a score that the individual needs to keep for themselves. Each tactical game should also have points for passes and goals, but don't punish players for losing. One regular or upside down push up is okay as long as its not portrayed as a punishment.
- 8) Finish with a game; that's what the players really want. Promise them a longer game at the end if they stay focused. Coach very

little during the game, and spend your time looking to see if your practice has made a change in their game. Also, look to see what you should work on next time.

- 9) Good luck, and above all, have fun! Thanks for spending your time developing these players as athletes and people.
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WHAT'S KICKIN?

The Massachusetts Instructional staff lead by Director of Coaching, Mike Singleton, is currently finishing up Mass Youth Soccer's FIRST EVER SKILLS ACADEMIES. The ten week program is held in 7 regional centers throughout the state. They have been reported as a huge success and our staff looks to increase the number of locations for 2005. Coach Licensing is at its usual annual peak with tons of courses being held across the state. Finally, the Olympic Development teams are up and running with spring season soon to be upon us.

If you are interested in having a Development Coach visit your town or area to lead a coaching course, conduct an age group/team practice, conduct a two hour coach's clinic, run a school break or summer camp, or organize a 2-3 year player development plan, please contact Tara Pierce at tpierce@mayouthsoccer.org or call her at 800-852-8111 x 225. We are also eager and happy to attend board meetings to help administrators and share what is going on in other areas so as to avoid recreating the wheel.

BOOK / VIDEO REVIEW: *Italian 4-4-2*

The *Italian 4-4-2* is an advanced level video, best for coaches working with club or Olympic Development teams over the age of fourteen. Predominantly the video shows a number of exercises that Sacchi used to prepare the 1994 Italian World Cup team that reached the final. It includes small-sided games, and functional training. This is probably the best zonal defending video on the market currently.

Sacchi shows how to organize:

- The Flat Back Four
- Zonal Defense
- Developing and Maintaining Shape
- Attacking as a Compact Unit
- Pattern Play, Overlapping, Use of Width
- Changing the Point of Attack

- Pressing on Attack, in Midfield and Defense
- Support on and off the Ball

This video and many more videos, books and DVD's can be found through **Reedswain, Inc.** at <https://www.reedswain.com>.

Phone: 800.331.5191 | Fax: 610.495.6632

Another great video and book company for soccer coaching is Soccer Learning Systems at <https://www.soccervideos.com>.

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