

THE TECHNICIAN

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**NEWSLETTER
FOR COACHES**

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Meyer/AFP/Getty Images

Children in Internazionale shirts celebrate the Milan club's centenary at the San Siro.



Captains go head to head in the 2007/08 UEFA Champions League: Inter's Javier Zanetti competes with Steven Gerrard of Liverpool.

IMPRESSUM

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Portugal's Simão Sabrosa fends off Christos Patsatzoglou of Greece, who nonetheless beat Portugal again, this time in their pre-EURO 2008 friendly.

(Photo: Witters Sport-Presse-Fotos)

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INTERDEPENDENCE

EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Recently, I had the pleasure to take part in a special birthday party. FC Internazionale Milano celebrated 100 years of existence with an official dinner, youth matches against Manchester United FC, Real Madrid CF, SL Benfica and AFC Ajax, a seminar for their network of grassroots' leaders, and a San Siro extravaganza (following their Serie A match with Reggina) which gave their supporters the opportunity to pay their respects to the Nerazzurri heroes who built the club's reputation. Sandro Mazzola, Giuseppe Bergomi, Luis Suárez and numerous other former stars walked onto a pitch which they had graced with footballing distinction. FC Internazionale (European Cup winners in 1964 and 1965, UEFA Cup holders three times, and club world champions twice) has its own history, but it is also part of something bigger – the game in a global context.

In football, independence and interdependence, like twin strikers, operate in juxtaposition. We have a shared history, a shared involvement in the game, and a shared responsibility for its future. Of course, everyone has his personal agenda, and each club and national team has its identity and its aspirations. But there must also be a collective commitment to preserve and respect the roots of the game, to care for its core values, and to promote an image of football which youngsters can aspire to and the public can admire.

An icon of football's past sat beside me during Inter's centenary match. Eusébio was world famous for his exploits for SL Benfica and Portugal and, if fate had played its part, he might also have worn the colours of FC Internazionale Milano. The maestro from Mozambique had agreed to sign for the Nerazzurri but because Italy lost to North Korea in the 1966 World Cup, the Italian authorities indulged in protectionism and put a ban on their clubs signing foreign players. Fortunately for the promotion of the game, players of Eusébio's status transcend national boundaries – they are universal treasures, whose humility and respect for others set the benchmark for sporting dignity. For example, Eusébio cannot understand how some of today's players perform histrionics when they score from a penalty. "You are expected to score from the spot – why should you overdo the celebrations when you do?", he argues. The image of Eusébio scoring at Wembley with a penalty during the World Cup in 1966, collecting the ball from the back of the net, and then consoling England's goalkeeper Gordon Banks with a friendly pat is something which will endure.

The spirit of Inter's Giacinto Facchetti will also live on. The club's training ground for youth development has been named after their former captain and president, and as a mark of respect for the great man who passed away in 2006, his number 3 shirt is no longer in use. Giacinto twice lifted the European Cup for FC Internazionale and football's original attacking full-back then made it a personal hat trick when he captained Italy to EURO triumph in 1968. Eusébio and Facchetti were never team-mates, but they were from the same school of gentlemen who gave more to the game than they took from it.

Forty years after Italy's victory in Rome, European football reaches a new milestone with the staging of EURO 2008 – the thirteenth championship for national associations. It is an appropriate moment to acknowledge the legacy of those who created the game's popularity – the great players, clubs and international teams. It is also a time to reflect on our responsibility for the image of the game, the development of its future, and the respect shown to those on the front line – players, referees and coaches.

You can't buy history, you can only create it. It's time to turn a new page as FC Internazionale Milano embark on their next 100 years, and 16 national teams set out to create a memorable European Championship in Switzerland and Austria. Whatever the future holds, the clubs and the national associations cannot avoid their collective responsibility – they are interdependent, and the advancement of the game and its continuing popularity will, to a large extent, depend on their concerted commitment to the promotion of football which is both competitive and spectacular.



Eusébio beats Gordon Banks with a penalty in the 1966 World Cup semi-final between England and Portugal.

INTERVIEW

BY ANDY ROXBURGH
(UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)
AND GRAHAM TURNER



LARS LAGERBÄCK JOINED THE SWEDISH FA 18 YEARS AGO AS COACHING DIRECTOR AND NATIONAL YOUTH COACH AND, FOLLOWING THE DEPARTURE OF TOMMY SVENSSON FROM THE NATIONAL TEAM IN 1997, HE WAS APPOINTED ASSISTANT TO NATIONAL COACH TOMMY SÖDERBERG. SOON, HOWEVER, LARS WAS ELEVATED TO JOINT NATIONAL MANAGER, A RARITY IN INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL, BEFORE HE TOOK SOLE CHARGE FOLLOWING TOMMY SÖDERBERG'S DECISION TO TAKE OVER THE UNDER-21 SQUAD. LARS LAGERBÄCK HAS THEREFORE BEEN RESPONSIBLE, EITHER AS CO-COACH OR AS THE HEAD IN HIS OWN RIGHT, FOR SWEDEN'S FIVE CONSECUTIVE QUALIFICATIONS FOR WORLD AND EUROPEAN FINAL ROUNDS. LARS, WHO IS A MEMBER OF UEFA'S COACHING PANEL, IS A QUIET, MODEST MAN WITH A GREAT KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF PREPARING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS. HE IS ONE OF SWEDEN'S MOST SUCCESSFUL COACHES, A MAN FOR THE BIG OCCASION – HE IS...

LARS LAGERBÄCK

1 • How do you rate Sweden's performance in the qualifying phase?

In the qualifying phase we drew with Northern Ireland and lost in Spain, so it wasn't until the last game that we earned our place in the finals. We did reasonably well, even though we struggled a bit against Northern Ireland and we were totally out of it when we played Spain away. Yet we beat them at home so I think the overview is that we did rather well.

2 • Based on what you saw during the qualifying phase, would you say the standard was high?

Yes, I think so. If you just look at the group we were in, a team like Northern Ireland surprised everybody, I think. It became a very tough group, especially as we had our neighbours Denmark in there – and it's always special playing them. I think the overall quality in our group was very high. I know you can always discuss the quality of the football in individual games – for example, we

had a very tough physical game in Northern Ireland, which is something that, if you want to succeed, you have to know how handle. It all added up to a good standard in the qualifying phase.

3 • Looking at the other qualifying groups, were there any surprises for you?

To be honest, no. If you look at the 14 teams who have qualified, I can't say that anyone has surprised me very much. Maybe Poland a little bit, because they were in an eight-team group and they hadn't been that good for the last four or six years. OK, if you look at the teams who missed out, you can always point to England. But we played Croatia in the World Cup qualifiers and we know that they are a tough team to beat. Of course, growing up in Sweden means that we are very close to English football and all of us have

high expectations of the England team. But everyone can see that there are not many English players at the top clubs over there any more – and that's probably a big problem for the national team.

4 • What are your expectations as you go into the final round?

I think your expectations are always focused on qualifying from the group phase. I try to describe myself as a coach as a 'realistic optimist' and I think there are different ways to approach a final round. When we first got in and hadn't got much experience, I talked to the players about setting goals and so on. Like many teams, if we have a good day, we can beat anyone. But at a tournament of this nature, you need to produce five really good games – and, when you come from a relatively small footballing country, it's really tough to hit that target, so to speak. But, even though we're in

**LARS LAGERBÄCK
GIVES INSTRUCTIONS DURING
SWEDEN'S MATCH WITH
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IN THE
2006 WORLD CUP IN GERMANY.**



a tough group, I'm confident. We have experienced players, we have players with individual skills, and we have the advantage that we have worked together for a long time. We know each other and we know how we want to play. So I think we have a fair chance of going on to the quarter-finals.

5 • What's your view on the other groups

Well, I think the toughest is Group C with the 'big elephants', as we say in Sweden – or the 'group of death' as the media were calling it after the draw. But, looking back over the years, I think there have been important changes since the Bosman ruling, because the smaller countries such as Switzerland and Sweden now have most of our players operating abroad at good clubs in good leagues. That's why it's becoming tougher and tougher at international level. The other two groups are very open, so it really is a case of 'anything can happen'.

6 • Do you think we can have another surprise like Greece?

Of course you can always have surprises. In the European Championship, we can talk about Denmark and Greece. But, from a historical perspective, this competition and the World Cup have usually been won by one of the big countries. So you have to say that it would be a surprise if one of the smaller countries was to win it.

7 • How important is national team football for the players, do you think?

That's another interesting after-effect of the Bosman ruling. At the big clubs

all over Europe, there are players from all over the world. Many of them are therefore happy to travel home to play for the national team to be with long-standing friends and to speak their own language. There are often communication problems in the dressing rooms at clubs so, with very few exceptions, players are glad to come home for national team games.

8 • How do you keep in touch with your players during the season?

The telephone is obviously your best friend. But, basically, we follow in greater depth a group of around 35 players who are in 12 to 15 different countries. Roland Andersson and I travel around a lot in order to see them 'live' as often as possible. Then, during the six weeks before the final round, we ask them to give us more detailed information about how much they have been playing and training, whether they have ill or injured, and so on. We do this mostly by email.

9 • What specialists do you include in your team-behind-the team for a final round?

We basically use the traditional squad of medical staff and so on. The only different element is that we have Paul Balsom working with us as a physiologist. That's his basic job but he does all the analysis on the computer. Otherwise it's a standard approach with a goalkeeping coach and all that.

10 • How exactly does Paul help you?

He tries to make sure we have the right levels of intensity in our practice. We started about ten years ago with



DISCUSSIONS WITH HENRIK LARSSON DURING A TRAINING SESSION.

a bit of testing. But then we decided that testing was maybe not the best way to go. Instead we started to focus, during the two or three weeks before the tournament, on the intensity of the work we were doing with the players, based on the information we had gathered during the previous weeks. We know pretty well what sort of physical shape each player is in, so the only thing we use is the max. pulse data to monitor the body responses to exercise. We have experimented with different systems but, bearing in mind that there's a tough schedule of one match every three days, we've opted to use only the basic material supplied by UEFA.

11 • So what do you focus on when you get the squad together for pre-tournament training?

Well, the plan is to have the players in on 22 May. Then, during the first week, we individualise the work as much as we can. Some players might need more physical exercise; others might need something else. We end the first week by playing a friendly involving the players who are in most need of some match action. Then we give them a day off, followed by a second week when we concentrate on the way we want to play. Normally we train for 80–90 minutes and we normally have a theme in defence or attack which we work on for 30, 40 or 45 minutes. That's when we try to perfect our game and make sure the players are in the right positions. That's our priority because, as I said before, they come from 12 or 13 countries where the game is being played a bit differently. For example, we operate a zonal defence and some of them might be working in a marking system. So you have to work on the mental side as well so that they can make the transition as smoothly as possible and make sure the mechanisms are working as soon as they go on to the pitch. It means that we have to repeat a lot

of things and I must give the players full credit because they are motivated to go out and do this sort of practice – and I'm not sure that this is the case in every country.

12 • Do you use any technical support tools?

We use the computer analysis programme and monitor the heart rate. Otherwise, we rely on our own knowledge and experience.

13 • How would you describe the Swedish philosophy in relation to a style of football?

Part of it is closely connected to Swedish club football. But, having looked at club and national team football over the years, it's obvious that winning teams have a very clear way of playing. So the basic thing is to have a concept that the players accept and want to work with: how you want to defend, how you want to attack. Then you need the sort of individual skills that can help you to win things – and maybe that's why we struggle to go beyond the quarter-finals. I think that's the basic philosophy which exists in Sweden: a team ethic, good organisation, and emphasis on creating enough space for the individual

elements to express themselves. Trying to find the right balance is one of the most interesting things about being a coach.

14 • How would describe your style?

I want the whole team to participate in attack and in defence. We have clear ideas about how we want our forwards to defend and what their roles should be. When it comes to attack, we want as many players as possible to participate. But you can't throw everybody forward, of course, so we always emphasise the importance of keeping a good balance in the team. But what we have tried to develop over the last four or five years is that, with more fast players in the team, we want players who, when we win the ball, look to see if we can make a quick move towards the opponents' goal. It's no secret that, with today's standards of team organisation and fitness, a rapid transition into attack gives good opportunities to create scoring chances. If we can't do that, we talk a lot about having patience in the build-up. I'm quite happy if we keep the ball in our own half of the pitch and wait for the right moment. Losing your patience makes it much easier for the opponent to rob the ball from you.



Lars Lagerbäck surrounded by Swedish internationals as they prepare to face Spain in the EURO 2008 qualifiers.

**THE COACHES OF THE FOUR
EURO 2008 GROUP D TEAMS AFTER THE DRAW
IN LUCERNE: LUIS ARAGONES (SPAIN),
OTTO REHHAGEL (GREECE), GUUS HIDDINK (RUSSIA)
AND LARS LAGERBÄCK (SWEDEN).**



Baron/Bongarts/Cesty / Images



Empics Sport/PA Photos

Lars Lagerbäck congratulates Zlatan Ibrahimović, who scored the late equaliser against Italy at EURO 2004 in Portugal.

15 • What impact does the Swedish league's calendar have on your preparations?

Very little today – less than when we started with the national team in 1998. But, these days, the players in the Swedish top division are professional and train all the year round. And we don't have that many players from the Swedish championship in the national team because, with all due respect, it is not good enough. In the squad for EURO 2008, you'll probably see only three or four players from the Swedish league, so the effect is not that great.

16 • What is the Swedish FA doing to promote the development of talents for the future of the national teams?

We are working on one of the best projects that I have experienced in the FA. In 1992 we started a special programme with the first and second division clubs whereby we work very closely together. The association distributes money from sponsors – but on condition that each club has a qualified

coach and good all-year training facilities for the 16-19 age group. This has worked very, very well since 1992. But the difficulty we have encountered in recent years is that our clubs don't really go far enough in the European competitions. So, three years ago, the association and the league agreed on a scheme that has been operating for the last eight months or so. It's giving coaches opportunities for re-education – not only the senior team coaches but, more especially, the youth coaches. We're putting a lot of money into that at the moment and also working on creating better-quality academies, as they call them in England. So we're trying to build further on the project that started in 1992. We need to work hard to get more clubs playing international football. This is important because, from my point of view, a player from the Swedish league comes into the national team with very little experience of international football. We need the clubs to do better on the international scene. At the same time, I think the association has done very well with regard to building indoor halls – full-size and smaller pitches where we can practise with the young players all the year round. I don't know if you remember Roger Gustafsson, who was the coach of IFK Göteborg. He's now working with their academy as well as being head coach. He says that, if you're brought up in Sweden, between the ages of 10 and 13, you play football for six months a year. In the southern parts of Europe, kids of that age play for 10, 11 or 12 months of the year. That means a 15-year-old in Italy has, perhaps, 10,000 hours of football. A Swedish kid has to be 18 or 19 to have accumulated that much football. That's an important facet for us if we aim to get closer to the top in terms of individual skills.

17 • In your view, is there a bright future for international football?

I'm a little bit worried, even though I see how much interest the European

Championship and the World Cup create, with so many supporters coming in. It looks very bright. I think UEFA has done a marvellous job of bringing together all the different elements and creating a situation of peace. But when you talk about 24 teams getting into European Championship finals, it's going to make it easier for smaller countries like Sweden to get in. But you have to wonder about the quality. And you have to ask whether a reduced qualifying phase will, in fact, mean fewer competitive games for the national team. Will the clubs seize a chance to reduce the number of national team games? As a national team coach, you can't really afford to give away more time than you have at the moment. But, if UEFA, the clubs and FIFA can really cooperate on this, I think the future is extremely bright.

18 • Apart from having good players, what are the factors that have most influence on the success of a national team coach?

To have really good staff around you and to have a lot of confidence. You need to believe in yourself, not to listen to too many people around you, and to do what you honestly think are the best things to do. Working with the national team gives you so little time. That means you need to have the right priorities all the time and to have a really good organisation around the team so that everything is as efficient as possible.

19 • If you had to give one piece of advice to a youngish coach starting with a national team now, what would it be?

Get your priorities right. With so little time, you need to organise the team and practise the way you want to play. Even players from the top nations are nowadays playing in other countries, so that's the best piece of basic advice I can give.



GILBERTO MADAIL, PRESIDENT OF THE PORTUGUESE FOOTBALL FEDERATION AND MEMBER OF THE UEFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

STAR PUPILS AND STAR TEACHERS

HOW SIGNIFICANT IS IT THAT PEOPLE OFTEN REFER TO 'STAR PUPILS' BUT NEVER TALK ABOUT 'STAR TEACHERS'? ARE EDUCATORS IN GENERAL UNDERVALUED? AND ARE THEY ESPECIALLY UNDERVALUED IN FOOTBALL? THESE QUESTIONS MIGHT EASILY HAVE BEEN POSED BY AN EAVESDROPPER AT THE 17TH UEFA COURSE FOR COACH EDUCATORS STAGED RECENTLY IN CASCAIS, WHERE THE PORTUGUESE FA HOSTED AN EVENT FEATURING COACH EDUCATORS AND TECHNICAL DIRECTORS FROM 52 MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS.

There was a varied programme of presentations, interviews and practical work. Portugal's Luiz Felipe Scolari, Sweden's Lars Lagerbäck, the Republic of Ireland's Pat Bonner and England's Sir Trevor Brooking discussed issues affecting coaches and their educators. Paulo Sousa, now a UEFA pro-licence holder, helped Andy Roxburgh to conduct a coach-the-coach practical session with the Under-19 squad from Sporting Clube. Germany's Erich Rutenmüller worked on combination play. Austria's Paul Gludovatz focused on changes of pace and tempo. And the hosts' coach educator, Jorge Castelo, teamed up with CF Os Belenenses coach Rui Jorge for a session based on the development of technique.

But the course was fundamentally an exercise in self-appraisal. The core theme was an examination of the role of the coach educator and the virtues required by the people who, as UEFA Technical Director Andy Roxburgh put it when he opened the proceedings in Portugal, "aim to produce professionally competent coaches who, in turn, produce skilful players and create successful teams."

As in many sectors of the business world, the starting point for self-

appraisal is an accurate job description. And, for coach educators, this is not always easy. In other sectors, 'teacher training' can be focused on equipping the students to teach a specific subject to pupils from a specific age group and, very often, a specific social background. In football, this is not the case. The subject matter is extraordinarily diverse, age groups are not clearly defined and the student coaches' playing (or non-playing) backgrounds can vary considerably. Nor can they be prepared for a clear-cut role. One 'training group' can accommodate students whose aspirations cover the whole footballing spectrum from the top of the tree to the grassroots, from Champions League to junior league. In addition, coach education embraces emotional and psychological responses. In how many sectors of the job market do students need to be prepared to 'do a Rafa Benítez' and bounce back after two early dismissals?

As Andy Roxburgh stressed in Cascais, the very complexity of the job is what makes it so stimulating. "A good coach of coaches," he says, "is a person who can get the best out of student coaches, to help them realise their potential. Coach educators develop coaches as individuals and contribute to the coaching profession by educating the next

generation. They don't just teach football. They teach ideas, principles and values. They prepare coaches psychologically for a profession which requires them to deal with players, media, technology, football politics and crisis management."

What's more, the coach educator needs to implement a different style of teaching based on the philosophy that it's more important to teach students *how* to coach rather than *what* to coach. The educational process focuses on illustrating alternatives rather than trying an 'absolute truth' which, in football, doesn't exist. In fact, diversity is the lifeblood of football. So, as Andy Roxburgh underlined, "the aim is to develop from within; to inspire a coach to develop individual talents and beliefs. You could say that the educator has five specific tasks: to inspire, to educate, to protect, to prepare and to assess."

The educational component must evidently be based on thinking and learning, using work experience, coaching competence and management skills as the foundation stones of development.

"The element of 'protection' is crucial," Roxburgh reflects. "Someone coming

**LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI,
PORTUGAL'S NATIONAL COACH.**



into the game as a coach must be made aware of the importance of protecting individuals, players, clubs, national teams – indeed, the future of football. Everything we do should be inspired by a love of the game.”

There is a temptation to think that the role of the coach educator is fundamentally about tactics and playing strategy. But, in this day and age, coaches – and not only those who work in the elite bracket – need to be prepared to navigate comfortably through the potentially troubled waters of player power, media demands and commercial or political factors which can exert a direct influence on team building and collective performance. These seemingly ‘peripheral’ issues have now penetrated into positions much closer

to the core of the coaching profession. Another fact of life in the modern game is that coaches increasingly have to work in contexts dominated by high, short-term expectations. Coach educators as well – because, during the discussion sessions in Portugal, it was remarked that the institutions who inject funds into coach education also tend to do so with high expectations of short-term dividends. Concern was expressed that these pressures could be translated into over-theoretical coach education and, in consequence, a risk of producing stereotyped footballers. Creativity and imagination, the participants in Cascais maintained, are precious assets which need to be stimulated and encouraged – not stifled by negative coaching which takes the fun out of the game.

Once a ‘job description’ has been drafted, the next questions relate to the coach educator’s profile. And this was one of the issues which Andy Roxburgh broached during his presentation in Cascais. “If we’re trying to describe the perfect coach educator,” he responded, “he clearly needs to be a communicator. As a person, he would blend humility with an open, outgoing personality. With the students, he would be patient, contagiously enthusiastic, reliable and demanding. I quite like the old axiom about ‘a good manager is easy to work with and difficult to please.’ In his everyday work, the coach educator needs to be practical, he should be a good planner and organiser, and he should be decisive and confident in what he is doing. At the same time, he needs to have vision and imagination coupled



Photos: Sportfile



**NICO ROMEIJN,
COACH EDUCATOR
AT THE ROYAL
NETHERLANDS FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION.**

with extensive experience. I remember that Sven-Göran Eriksson once said 'you can sell experience, but you can't buy it. You must gain it.' Bearing in mind the sort of coaching students you're dealing with, it's an extremely valuable commodity."

But how do you gain it? The answer, of course, is that the coach educator can absorb experience from different directions: from playing experience, from work experience as a coach, from courses and seminars, or via collaboration with mentors or further education programmes. At the same time, it has to be said that self-reliant learning is a heavy weapon in the coach's armoury – and also in the coach educator's.

This was cause for a degree of concern among some of the participants in Cascais. Some advocated the increased use of internet technology to compensate for a shortfall in coach education literature and documentation. Others expressed concerns about the costs of coach education reaching prohibitive levels, increasing the risks of excluding certain target groups and losing stu-

dents with great potential. This, in turn, raised questions about subsidies, methods of spreading the financial burden over a greater period of time, or support from Olympic Committees or other organisations – though with the proviso that national associations should run their own programmes.

With the European football family radically changing shape in a relatively short space of time, there are obviously challenges to be met. But the coach educator's vocation remains the same: "The basic objectives are to educate students on how to coach and how to manage – and they are two different things," says Andy Roxburgh. "There must also be a balanced emphasis on facets such as helping the students to organise, to plan, to prepare what is going to happen on the training pitch and to use the tools which are available to the modern-day technician. And let's not forget that many of our students may not be naturally good communicators and will need guidance and tuition in that area."

Eusébio would agree with that. After the Portuguese national associa-

tion's technical coordinator, Arnaldo Cunha, had explained the host nation's coach education philosophy, the legendary striker was asked for his views on what qualities add up to a good coach. "It is someone who is able to talk to the players," Eusébio replied, "and get the maximum out of them. The ability to communicate is essential."

This view was wholeheartedly endorsed by Andy Roxburgh, who added, "in turn, a good educator of coaches is someone who can communicate with them in such a way as to get the best out of them, to help them realise their potential. Student coaches always welcome guidance on how to develop the individual player and on the art of team building."

But the prime concern for the coach educator is which methods to use when coaching student coaches. Andy Roxburgh is convinced that, bearing in mind the nature of the pupils, the student coach needs to be fully engaged in the learning process. "I remember Arsène Wenger saying at one of our meetings that players memorise better when they are actively involved in the learning process and I think the same is true when it comes to coach education – if not even more so. So you need to carefully weight up the balance between direct teaching and guided discovery, pointing students in the right direction and allowing them to explore the issues for themselves."

Roxburgh also stressed the importance of offering students all possible options – and this later tied in with concerns expressed in the discussion groups about the shortage of coaches in certain sectors, notably the youth areas in men's and women's football and in futsal. This, in turn, was linked to vital questions about the status of the coaching profession in general – and not just those who work at the peak of the pyramid. "Although you are not in headlines," Roxburgh told the audience



Paul Gludovatz of the Austrian Football Association gives instructions to the players for a practical demonstration.

**PER RAVN OMDAL,
MEMBER OF THE UEFA EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE AND CHAIRMAN
OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE.**



in Portugal, “please remember that you are extremely important to the development of football.”

But where is the development of football taking us? And how do we prepare coaches to cope with the trends that directly affect the coaching profession? Globalisation and pressure to achieve instant results are by no means restricted to the top end of the game. The image of football has changed – meaning that the public now regard coaches with slightly different perspectives and expectations. Never before have there been such high demands in terms of playing with style, of entertaining while winning. Specialist staff have been drafted into the coach’s team-behind-the-team, meaning that the head coach has to be equipped to build an effective backroom team. The greater speed of the game and the consequent lack of time and space add up to differences in training-ground activity and physical preparation. And newly introduced club and coach licensing structures are also changing the shape of the coaching profession in many European associations.

But technology is available, meaning that distance learning and online communication have become useful tools. Fast-tracking former players into the coaching profession is an option currently being explored by many associations. Mentoring schemes are becoming hearteningly more frequent. And there was applause for UEFA’s commitment to encouraging and upgrading exchange and knowledge-sharing programmes.

In Portugal, KNVB coach educator Nico Romeijn explained the assessment concepts currently being applied in Dutch football and Denmark’s Peter Rudbæk led the audience towards another highly relevant issue by reviewing the DBU’s refresher courses.

One of the viewpoints to emerge from the discussion groups in Cascais was that too many coaches do not make



Jorge Castelo of the Portuguese Football Federation supervises exercises during a practical session in Lisbon.

sufficient investments in self-knowledge, self-assessment and their own education. Some were concerned that coaches tend to prefer tried-and-trusted methods rather than innovating. There was a call for wider implementation of the sort of refresher courses the Danes are staging. Some maintained that dedicating resources to the filming of training sessions (to enable student coaches to review what they have done and pinpoint mistakes) is money well invested. Others advocated regular communication and exchange of ideas on internet platforms. And there was support for the development of education courses which encourage coaches to be more self-critical.

“As well as training the next generation of coaches,” Andy Roxburgh commented, “coach educators are vital in supporting the current generation to ensure that coaches are kept

up-to-date. Coach educators have to be aware of the latest trends. They have to keep in touch with how the game develops in terms of speed and tactics. They have to embrace new technology, research new teaching methods and seek innovative ways of getting the maximum out of their student coaches.”

As UEFA Executive Committee member Per Ravn Omdal told the participants in Cascais, “the education of coaches can never stop and we have to keep pace with the development of the game. I ask you all to contribute to football’s development by sharing knowledge with each other as much as possible.” Gilberto Madail, president of the Portuguese national association, closed the course with the concise statement: “Good coaches and quality coach educators will help football in Europe to develop further.”



Stollarz/Bongarts/Getty Images

**AUSTRIA (ANDREAS IVANSCHITZ, RIGHT)
AND THE NETHERLANDS (JOHN HEITINGA) TOOK PART IN
A HIGH-SCORING FRIENDLY AHEAD OF EURO 2008.**

THE 18TH TEAM

IT HAS BECOME A EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP TRADITION TO CALL THE MATCH OFFICIALS THE '17TH TEAM' AT THE FINALS. AT EURO 2008, THERE'LL BE AN 18TH: THE TECHNICAL TEAM. THE NAME CERTAINLY APPEALS TO THE TEAM MEMBERS. IN UEFA'S PLANNING DOCUMENTS, THEY'RE USUALLY CALLED THE TECHNICAL STUDY GROUP, OR TSG FOR SHORT. ANDY ROXBURGH, WHO CAPTAINS THE TEAM, IS NOT ALONE IN FEELING THAT NAME HAS A MISLEADINGLY ACADEMIC RING TO IT. SO, WHEN THE BALL STARTS ROLLING IN JUNE, IT'LL BE THE TECHNICAL TEAM WHO'LL BE KEEPING SOME EXPERT EYES ON IT.

It'll be two teams in fact: we'll avoid the quicksands of calling them the A team and the B team by pointing out that it's a purely geographical split. Jerzy Engel (Poland), Holger Osieck (Germany), Morten Olsen (Denmark) and György Mezey (Hungary) will be based in Zurich, while Vienna will be base camp for Jozef Venglos (Slovakia),

Gérard Houllier (France), Roy Hodgson (England), FIFA representative Jean-Paul Brigger and the team captain, Andy Roxburgh.

Simplistically speaking, the role of the Technical Team is to represent absent colleagues. Only sixteen national team coaches will gain first-hand experience

in Austria and Switzerland and, as Lars Lagerbäck explains elsewhere in this issue, experience is a valuable weapon to have in your armoury. The Technical Team aims to relay 'second-hand' experience.

Of course, the team also performs more media-orientated tasks – and



Italy's Antonio di Natale in possession of the ball against Spain during a EURO 2008 warm-up match.

Getty Images

they are usually demanding ones at that. It's not always easy to select the man of the match; it takes hours of debating to come up with a team of the tournament, and a great deal of soul-searching to single out a player of the tournament. But, as neutral observers, the members of the Technical Team represent a logical choice when it comes to looking for judges.

In terms of passing on information to colleagues, the first date in the diary is the National Team Coaches Conference, which will mark a return to Vienna at the end of September. This is a three-day 'debriefing' during which technical and logistical issues will be discussed. This serves a dual purpose as, apart from passing on information to those responsible for the national teams of the other 37 associations, suggestions can be put down on UEFA debating tables with a view to further improving the final tournament in the future. The Technical Team is therefore responsible for the input of information and for identifying the areas which most warrant discussion during the 'plenary meeting' of Europe's national team coaches.

Their other brief is to produce a technically-orientated record of the event which can be reliably used as a reference work in years to come. This is based on the coaches' observations and backed by official data.

But, as the team members would be the first to admit, the final tournament also represents an all-too-rare opportunity, in what is essentially a solitary profession, for a group of coaches to exchange views and strike sparks off each other. The end result will not only be a printed technical report on EURO 2008, but an opportunity to identify trends in the international game.



A show of strength from Michael Ballack of Germany in the recent friendly against Switzerland.

All of this technical observation and assessment is by no means restricted to the finals of the European Football Championship, although this probably generates the thickest volume produced by Andy Roxburgh's Technical Teams. The word 'probably' is in that sentence because the UEFA Champions League Technical Report – the tenth edition of which will be published this summer – is also a bulky volume, bearing in mind that, whereas a EURO involves 16 teams and 31 matches, the premier club competition involves 32 and 125 respectively.

Technical Teams are now at almost all of the final tournaments organised by UEFA in order to observe, to detect developments, to provoke debate and to present all this to their colleagues

in the form of a technical report. It's a fascinating exercise to read through the booklets which have been filling reference shelves for the last dozen years or so – as Thierry Henry found when we recently went to speak to him in Barcelona with a copy of the 1996 U18 technical report tucked in the bag. He re-read the observations he had made as captain of a French gold-medal team that featured William Gal- las, Mickaël Silvestre, David Trézéguet and Nicolas Anelka, and then looked at the photos of Emile Heskey, Michael Owen, 'Frankie' (as he preferred to be called at the time) Lampard, Simão Sabrosa and Gennaro Gattuso. Let's hope that the Technical Team at EURO 2008 will also produce a report that, in years to come, will not only be a reference work but also a collectors' item...



**THE UEFA DEVELOPMENT AND
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE
WITH UEFA PRESIDENT MICHEL PLATINI
AND GENERAL SECRETARY DAVID TAYLOR
AT A MEETING IN NYON.**

FOOTBALL, DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

IT'S 32 YEARS SINCE ANTON ONDRUS AND FRANZ BECKENBAUER SHOOK HANDS AT THE 'LITTLE MARACANÁ' STADIUM IN BELGRADE AS CAPTAINS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN AND WEST GERMAN TEAMS WHO DISPUTED THE FIRST EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL TO BE DECIDED IN A PENALTY SHOOT-OUT. AT THAT MOMENT, NEITHER OF THEM WOULD HAVE DREAMED THAT THEY WOULD SHAKE HANDS AGAIN IN 2008 AS MEMBERS OF UEFA'S DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE, REPRESENTING – HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED – SLOVAKIA AND THE UNITED GERMANY.

But let's not get distracted by anecdotes or nostalgia. The real message is that technicians now have two UEFA committees to represent their interests – and the 14-man line-up for one of them includes Anton and Franz, led by chairman Per Ravn Omdal of Norway.

Alongside UEFA Technical Director Andy Roxburgh, Franz Beckenbauer operates in a midfield role linking the two committees. But, on the Football Committee that he chairs, he and fellow legend Dino Zoff will need to do some running to keep pace with slightly more recent champions of Europe such as Dejan Savicevic and Fernando Hierro.

However, the important thing about a star-studded team is the way it plays. So the first item on their respective agendas was to establish tactics and strategy. In short, the brief of the new Football Committee is to:

- Exchange views on the protection and further development of the game;
- Draw up recommendations on national team and club issues, the Laws of the Game, player protection, image, and other football-related matters which have an impact on the game;
- Act as ambassadors or representatives of UEFA at professional events, courses, conferences and youth or grassroots activities;
- Offer expert help in the production of UEFA's technical reports;
- Offer football-related proposals regarding UEFA competitions;
- Support top-level players and the development of young talents;

- Consider major issues which impact on the referee and the coach;
- Assist in promoting UEFA and the game of football.

By way of a warm-up, the committee reviewed some logistical issues such as guidelines for disputed goals and how to treat goals, cautions and dismissals from forfeited matches. The use of technology was discussed, and the committee endorsed the view previously expressed by the elite coaches that the use of LED track advertising boards should be discouraged, bearing in mind that, when the ball is in play, laterally-moving images can represent a severe distraction for players, coaches, match officials and spectators.



Fernando Hierro, Champions League winner, and now a member of the UEFA Football Committee.

By contrast, the Development and Technical Assistance Committee's brief is to:

- Supervise UEFA's technical and football assistance/exchange programmes within its member associations;
- Assist in the flow of information regarding training, education and technical reports;
- Support UEFA's technical advisers and consultants;
- Monitor the development of the UEFA Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications;
- Oversee grassroots and player development, especially through the Grassroots Charter;
- Cooperate with the Union of European Football Trainers.

The committee is supported by the Jira Panel, the Grassroots Football Panel and UEFA's technical instructors. At the first meeting, a series of priorities was established:

- To define a concept and to implement further technical exchange and assistance;
- To assist in the promotion, protection and development of the game through technical activities (technical reports, grassroots schemes, online education, etc.);
- To monitor the activities of the Jira Panel and the Grassroots Panel;
- To assist the associations via events and specialised advice in the further education of coaches, educators and grassroots leaders.

As the saying goes, watch this space!



Ceety Images

The Ernst Happel stadium in Vienna, venue of the EURO 2008 final.



Sportstyle

TRAINING ROUTINE

BY MIRCEA RADULESCU
 Director of the Romanian FA Coaching School
 (with Under-16 federal coach Lucian Burchel)

AGENDA

2008

June 7-29

- EURO 2008 (Austria/Switzerland)

July 7-19

- 7th European Women's Under-19 Championship – Final Tournament (France)

July 14-26

- 7th European Under-19 Championship – Final Tournament (Czech Republic)

August 29

- UEFA Super Cup (Monaco)

September 8-9

- 10th Elite Club Coaches Forum (Nyon)

September 22-24

- 8th Conference for European National Coaches (Vienna)



WAVES OF ATTACK

Aim

- To develop build-up play and to launch waves of attack.

Numbers

- 21 players (9 v 9 + 2 goalkeepers and 1 joker).

Area

- Full pitch.

Duration

- 50 minutes: 30 minutes coach-led
 15 minutes free play
 5 minute half-time rest period

Rules

- The ball must be dribbled across the halfway line.
- Only the player who takes the ball across the halfway line can join the attack.

- The joker is a midfield player who plays for the team in possession.
- Offside applies 30 metres from each goal.
- After a goal – restart with a goal kick.
- No pressure on defenders when in possession inside the 30-metre zone.

Coaching focus

- Build-up play – space creation, passing accuracy and goalkeeper involvement.
- Waves of attack – overlapping movements, combination play and switching the point of attack.
- Pressing – pressing the ball, closing the space and offering cover.
- Four-man zonal defence – collective movement of the back four, using off-side and dealing with mobile attackers.

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