

## EDITORIAL

# THE RICH TEXTURE OF COACHING

Within the space of four days in May, three very different coaches lifted three UEFA trophies. On Wednesday 21 May in Malta, John Peacock led his England team to a penalty shoot-out victory over the Netherlands in the final of the European Under-17 Championship. His work in the specialised field of youth development over more than a decade has been rewarded with European titles in 2010 and 2014 – though he emphasises the educational value of his coaching work above whatever silverware it might lead to. A day later, in Lisbon, Ralf Kellermann – who studied for his UEFA licence after hanging up his boots and decided to start his coaching career in the women's game – lifted the UEFA Women's Champions League trophy after VfL Wolfsburg had come from 2–0 down to successfully defend their European title. And, on Saturday 24 May, Carlo Ancelotti won the UEFA Champions League for the third time as a coach. Four days, three titles, three coaches and three different characters.

All three are accomplished members of a coaching fraternity united in its dedication to and passion for the game. But, within the profession, there is a diversity that is often forgotten. As Thomas Schaaf points out in these pages, *"football offers you a lot of different opportunities – not only at the elite professional level but also in the youth sector, the amateur sector... Even at the top pro levels there are various options. So, while you're going through your education as a coach, it's important to ask yourself: 'Where do I belong?'"*

The following pages are a reflection of that diversity and of UEFA's willingness to promote and support it. During the 2013/14 season, the introduction of the UEFA Youth League provided

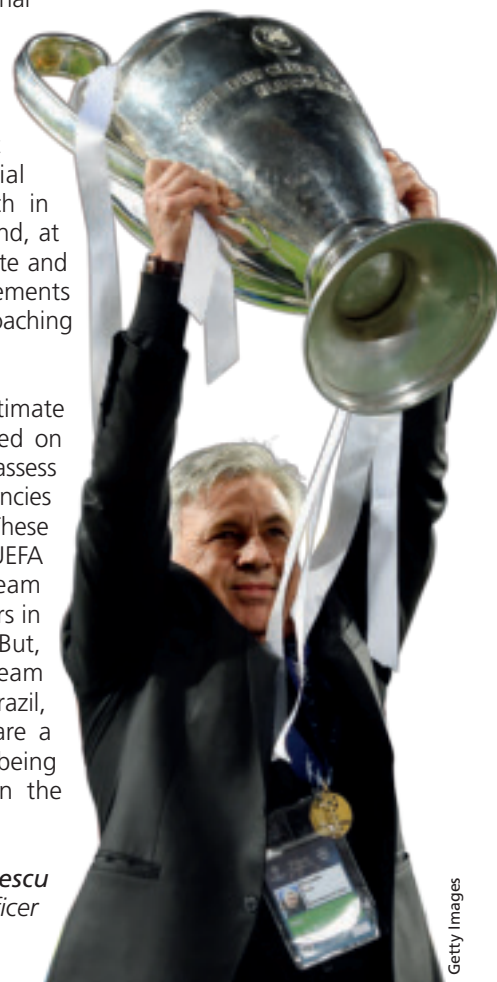
a platform for young players to further their development by participating in a top-level club competition run in parallel with the UEFA Champions League. It also helped to showcase the coaching work being conducted in this crucial educational phase and to promote contact and exchanges between the coaches of the youth teams that took part. *"It was great to see the commitment, the enthusiasm and the joy of all the different coaching staff communicating with each other thanks to these matches,"* the champion coach, Jordi Vinyals of FC Barcelona, said.

This issue also features the new UEFA-endorsed coaching licences that are set to be rolled out at the beginning of the 2014/15 season. Pan-European guidelines have been established for a UEFA Goalkeeper A licence and a UEFA Futsal B licence, with UEFA offering practical support and assistance to the (many) national associations who plan to establish and run these specialised coaching courses in the immediate future. The new UEFA licences represent recognition of the special knowledge required to coach in these two specialised areas and, at the same time, aim to facilitate and regulate cross-border movements by the members of the coaching profession who obtain them.

At the moment it is legitimate to have all eyes firmly focused on the FIFA World Cup and to assess whatever trends and tendencies become apparent in Brazil. These will be discussed at the FIFA-UEFA conference for national team coaches and technical directors in St Petersburg in September. But, while the elite national team coaches are competing in Brazil, it is not a bad thing to spare a thought for all the work being conducted at other levels in the diverse world of coaching. ●

**Ioan Lupescu**  
UEFA Chief Technical Officer

*With accreditation and gold medal round his neck, Carlo Ancelotti lifts the UEFA Champions League trophy in Lisbon*



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## THE INTERVIEW

During the interview in our previous issue, Sir Alex Ferguson shared some of the knowledge and experiences he had accumulated during 40 years of coaching – almost 27 of them at Manchester United FC. He's a hard act to follow and his record is hard to beat. But, in terms of longevity and loyal service to a single club, the man speaking to UEFA•technician this time could say he has gone one better – were he not too respectful to make such a claim. He joined SV Werder Bremen at the age of 11, signed his first professional contract six years later, made his Bundesliga debut in the Bremen defence 12 days before his 18th birthday and stayed at the club until he was 52. In that time, he clocked up 262 games in Germany's top division, won the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup in 1992, combined a playing career with his first steps along the coaching road with the Bremen youth teams, took over the first team from Felix Magath in 1999, led them to six trophies and six appearances in the UEFA Champions League and, after a mere 645 games in charge and 41 years at the club, left in 2013 to take a well-earned breather – and the occasional trip to UEFA headquarters to pass on his knowledge to budding coaching talents at Pro licence student exchange courses – before embarking on a new venture as head coach of Eintracht Frankfurt. The coach in question is of course...

## THOMAS SCHAAF



*First of all, how did you make the transition from player to coach? And how did you prepare for it?*

At 26 I realised that I felt suited to coaching so I decided relatively early to do the licences. I was still active as a player, but I did the coaching licence at the university in Cologne and, at the same time, became coach of the youth team. I believe it was a really good education; a good decision on how to approach things. I believe that it is very important to go through this education phase. As a player, you might naturally think that you know it all, or at least a lot, and that you therefore just need to be able to explain yourself. But you quickly realise that you're missing some key background knowledge that you then get through your education. I really enjoyed being so immersed in it. And when I was coaching the youth teams I could give the kids a lot of advice, because I played myself and could show them things. So everything went step by step. I took care of my education, did my licences. And then in 1993 – that was one of my hardest years – I was still playing actively, was coaching a youth team, and was also doing my studies at the university in Cologne. So that was a busy and full schedule.

*Some top players have earned their licences through fast-track schemes. Would you have liked to do that?*

In Germany we've had seminars of this nature but I'm not in favour. I think it's important to go through a full education, with the experience you gain and the intensive work you do on all

aspects of the game. There's nothing better that can happen to you. Another thing to bear in mind is that football offers you a lot of different opportunities – not only at the elite professional level but also in the youth sector, the amateur sector... Even at the top pro levels there are various options. So, while you're going through your education as a coach, it's important to ask yourself: 'Where do I belong?', 'What is the best field for me?', 'Where do I feel best?' and 'Where can I best involve myself?' Being a player is one thing, but moving into coaching is something different and you should take the time to achieve certain goals, to go step by step and to find your place within the game.

*Having started at youth level, has that helped to shape your attitudes?*

Yes, very much. Having worked extensively with youth teams and drawn up concepts and



*Midfielder Thomas Schaaf, wearing the green shirt of Werder Bremen, in Bundesliga action against Borussia Dortmund*





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development plans, it's something I've stayed faithful to. Wherever I have worked and wherever I work in the future, I want close links and the best possible relationships with the youth teams. I like to make sure that there's a willingness to advance young players as early as possible. If I think they are good enough and physically capable, I'm ready to expose them to football of a professional standard. It's something that, as a coach, you need to stay on top of. Because you need to gauge when the best moment is for a young player to get involved and have a chance to show his qualities. You have to be careful that you don't place excessively heavy demands on the player and, of course, you have to give priority to the needs of the team as a whole. If it's the Champions League, I can't field a team of 18-year-olds, that's clear. But I'm always ready to give young players a chance in the team.

#### *How has the job changed over the years you have been involved?*

It's changed so much. When I look back at the start, it was a completely different situation. You had a head coach, perhaps an assistant, but you tended to not have a goalkeeping coach or anybody else. Today it's a different picture. Before, you spent more time on the field, but now that's been pushed aside a bit. You have plenty of other jobs and the demands have

become much more intensive. The person who used to be a 'drill leader' is now much more of an organiser and a man-manager. And the players have also changed. It's a new generation now, which poses new challenges for a coach. You also need to establish relationships with the decision-makers and talk intensively with them to clearly agree on a framework, to clearly express your philosophy and to set out plans and objectives. Then you need to take firm guidelines into the dressing room and define all the tasks. We have to lead the team but, at the same time, teach and coach the players and encourage them to take responsibility for what happens on the pitch. These days you have a squad of 25 to 30 players, so it's important to create a good team behind the team.

#### *How would you describe your management style?*

Very democratic, I would say. I'm a team player and prefer to involve the players and my coaching colleagues. When there are discussions, everybody can express themselves freely, even though I'm responsible for taking the final decision. For me, it's important to get feedback from the players – to involve them. It's also important to build a team that has all kinds of characters in it. I think there are two fundamental aspects: duty and what I would call 'freestyle'. To earn the right to freestyle, a player

*Thomas Schaaf encourages his players "to take responsibility for what happens on the pitch"*

should first fulfil his duties, showing commitment, strength and willingness to work and run. If he does that, he lays the foundations for doing the things that mark him out as a special player – to show what he is brilliant at – not to show off, but for the benefit and success of the team. For today's coach, leadership skills are crucial because you have to lead not only the team but also a much bigger coaching staff.

*How do you go about selecting this coaching staff?*

You clearly want people you know inside-out. But the decisive thing is what their character is like, whether they can work within a team and whether they can get on with the players. The

scenario is different for each member, according to their role with regard to the players. As head coach, I might want to keep a certain distance. As assistant, I might get a little closer. And as a fitness coach, you might be even closer because you're working

with individuals to get them into shape. So personality is important, along with specialist knowledge, of course, and the conviction that we should all be heading in the same direction.

I was a person who delegated reluctantly. I would rather do things myself. So I had to learn to delegate and I did it a lot more as the years went by. I handed out certain duties and moved into a more supervisory role.

It meant that I was able to take time to look more deeply into every single aspect. For example, if the defenders

were working on covering or on building the game, I would observe and judge whether it was effective or not. Then I would look at the forwards and ask questions about the quality of their finishing or their passing in midfield areas. And so on. In each area, there would be moments when I would say to myself, 'now you have to get involved'. Those were the crucial moments. Sometimes I might divide the squad into groups before training and observe one of them – the one I thought was a priority group in terms of general team efficiency, or maybe just the next game. These are the things that have changed in the head coach's daily workload. You have to accept that you have three main jobs: to coach the squad on the pitch, to manage all of your 'target groups' within the club, and to spend a lot of time on organisational matters.

*How would you describe your style and footballing philosophy? Have you changed them to adjust to the new generations of players?*

Playing for many years allowed me to develop ideas about how I would want my team to play. As I said, I was fortunate in that I could try things out with the youth teams and discover what was genuinely doable. For example, you could train something during the week and see it work to perfection in the game. Then you'd play a different opponent the next week and see that it didn't work at all! So you evaluate your work continuously and try to develop a viable style. My starting point was to not over-focus on defending and keeping a clean sheet. I don't have a problem with 4-3 as long as we have scored four. If we lose, I'll have things to say about it. But if we offer the fans a good show and win, that gives me satisfaction. It is important to feel free to coach my way. And my preference is for my team to play nice football and not just long forward balls all the time. There are moments when you might need to do that, but my preference is for a game based on possession and combination moves – a good passing game which includes the potential to counterattack quickly.

*Is that a typical German mentality?*

Yes, it is! But it's something I always tried to achieve. My attitude is to have a team that competes in all areas and remains loyal to its philosophy. When I started as head coach in 1999, it was first and foremost about building a core which I could influence with my own ideas. It can be difficult because one player or another can be sold and you have to build again. But we always tried to stick to the same principles and we strived to find the right players to be able to do that. It isn't always easy because the competition is so fierce and the level in the Bundesliga is very high. But I strongly support the idea of a coach staying true to his beliefs.

*"Leadership skills are crucial"*

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*These days, coaches have many more tools available to them when preparing for games. To what extent do you use all these tools?*

It's important to be as well informed as possible about what your opponent can do. Then you have to find the right balance between explaining things about the opponent and performing basic team duties. I always ask a lot of questions. How do we want to play this game? What tactical approach is the best? Do we want to press? If so, do we want to press high? Or do we want to drop back and wait for them? How do we want to use the wide areas? Do we want to focus on possession? Or are we happy to have less of the ball and to counterattack? I use a lot of tools to work on all the tactical aspects – just about everything there is! I can use clips from previous games to show things to the players and explain the principles that we should set out to apply in the next match. I find things that I feel are exactly right for the situation and tell them, 'that's what I want to see. I want to experience that again.' Then you examine what the opposition tends to do. Sometimes I put images on a USB stick and give it to the players. In training during the week, we recreate certain situations and look for solutions that we think will put us in a good position to win. There are so many tools available now. Some coaches, for example, prefer to do video-clip analysis during half-time, the analyst in the dressing room with his laptop and screen picking out three or four situations from the first half. I acknowledge that this has its benefits. On the other hand, I think it's important to have direct contact with the players during the few minutes that you have with them. I prefer to discuss things and make two or three precise observations – and to talk to players individually. For me, that's the most efficient way.

*Over such a long career, you've obviously had difficult moments and have had to do some crisis management. What do you do when the going gets tough?*

Of course there have been ups and downs. Conceding seven in Lyon in the Champions League wasn't at all good! But you just need to breathe in and stay calm because in the bad moments, emotions are no help whatsoever. It's very important to be mentally equipped to make a clear analysis of the situation, even if it may not be very pleasant. You have to identify the things that have gone wrong and you have to find solutions that allow you to remain true to your own philosophy. To discard or discredit your beliefs would simply make things worse. You have to be careful that you don't start a spiral of despair or disappointment. You don't want to start making unrealistic promises that everything will be all right the next day, but you need to give the players encouragement and help them to achieve a success – no matter how small a success it might be.

One of the realities of football is that it can take a long time to make your way upwards and it can be tough to stay near the top, but going down takes no time at all. When a team loses, it's sometimes because they were outbattled, they gave the opposition too much space, they let certain opponents play... factors like that. But it's very easy for people to question the whole system, and that's when you've got to be careful. So calm is needed, along with a clear head to make a clear analysis of exactly what has gone wrong. If you decide that certain individuals have let the team down, they need to be taken out. That's something that those players will then have to deal with – and that sort of thing is what, as a coach, you have to handle with conviction. In the bad moments, you have to go step by step to regain confidence and success. You might start by focusing on ball-winning in training, for example, because those sorts of detail help the players to get their confidence back. ●

*Thomas Schaaf's players are downcast after losing the last UEFA Cup final to FC Shakhtar Donetsk in 2009*

# FAST FORWARD FOR FUTSAL

In the UEFA diary for 2014, a third pilot course for futsal coach educators might not stand out as headline news. But this four-day event, staged in Prague during the first week of May, had enormous significance for the indoor game. Petr Fousek, second vice-chairman of UEFA's futsal committee, welcomed the participants to his 'home ground' with the observation that, *"after years of fighting for due recognition, futsal is moving forward and opening up new space"*. His motive for making this observation was the imminent roll-out of the UEFA Futsal B licence.



Participants in the stands listen to explanations from the coach during one of the practical sessions in Prague

To put the Prague event into context, it was the third and final pilot course aimed at presenting the blueprint for the UEFA licence to coach educators and technical directors from all of UEFA's member associations. The first two pilots, staged at the Spanish federation's national training centre at Las Rozas and at the Novarello complex in Italy, had brought together the associations making their way up the futsal ladder, while the third event in Prague was aimed at the leading nations, including the 12 who had qualified for the UEFA Futsal EURO 2014, staged in Antwerp at the beginning of the year.

This was a cue to invite the coaches of the four semi-finalist teams to step onto the stage on the second morning, when former world and European champion Javier Lozano (who'd been in Antwerp as a member of UEFA's technical team) interviewed Jorge Braz of Portugal, José Venancio López, coach of Spain's bronze-medal team, Russia's silver-medal coach, Sergei Skorovich, and the current European champion, Roberto Menichelli of Italy.

They discussed some of the challenges faced by coaches who take teams to final tournaments where a highly intensive match schedule places heavy physical and mental demands on players, with Italy's victorious campaign involving 5 matches in 11 days – starting with an unexpected 3–2 defeat by Slovenia. Menichelli admitted that he'd had to work hard on restoring morale after that initial reverse, pointing out that *"a real winner is somebody who can fall and immediately get back on his feet"*.

The intensity of the tournament obliged the coaches to draw up meticulous training programmes. As Braz commented, *"you had to be clever about assessing the volume of your training work. There wasn't much time, so it was important to maximise the effectiveness of sessions. We focused on organising our game but, at the same time, we had to devise exercises that would help us to cope with high levels of speed and physical contact."* The two finalist coaches also underscored the value of investing in set-play routines at major futsal tournaments. *"We ended every single training session with work on set plays,"* Skorovich explained. *"We focused on defending against the set plays used by our next opponents but we also worked hard on our own dead-ball situations, especially the kick-in."* Menichelli echoed his Russian colleague's position: *"We worked hard on set plays – and the work paid high dividends. A high percentage of our crucial goals came from corners."*

Lozano had laid the foundations for these round-table discussions by presenting some of the salient features of UEFA's technical report on the event, including a significant rate of success from set pieces. Of the tournament's 121 goals, 15 had resulted from corners, while a further 11 had stemmed from kick-ins. Lozano also highlighted the return of the attacking pivot (an endangered species in recent times, a situation not dissimilar to the moves towards striker-less formations in the outdoor game), and the defensive adjustments that most teams had been obliged to make in response. He then pointed out that only 63 % of the possible time-outs had been used by coaches during the tournament, with Menichelli using only three of the ten opportunities he'd had during Italy's five games.

The use and misuse of the flying goalkeeper remains a concern for the coaches, who are anxious to preserve the high pace and entertainment value of the indoor game. Lozano hearteningly reported that, in Antwerp, the flying keeper had only once been deployed with non-attacking intentions and that in many cases the move had been counterproductive. Teams switching to flying-keeper mode had scored 11 goals but conceded 19.

Antwerp aside, the core elements of the pilot course in Prague were the coach education aspects of the new UEFA Futsal B licence, with the top experts playing leading roles in the theoretical



and practical sessions aimed at offering benchmarks to the people responsible for coach education at the other 21 national associations that had sent representatives to Prague.

As Spain's national team coach, López stressed that *"the methodology employed by futsal coaches is crucial to player development. Players have to be prepared to respond in rapid, organised and effective fashion to rapidly changing situations which are not repetitive. This means that coaches need to educate players to cope with any situation. They must be equipped to solve problems. This is all about perception, speed of decision-making allied with rapid and precise execution of those decisions. The coach therefore needs to develop the players' reading of the game and their creativity – and the coach educators need to prepare student coaches by offering them perspectives on how these elements can be taught. My personal belief is that the key for coaches is to set challenges that have multiple solutions – which can then be discussed with the players."*

Lozano continued down the 'guided discovery' path in sessions which addressed the fundamental coaching issues of leadership, management of the game and what is collectively known as 'futsal knowledge'. Discussions in Prague focused on pinpointing the common denominators in futsal and the outdoor game in terms of the elements covered in coach education courses. But parameters are evidently different – sometimes radically – in certain aspects of the indoor game. None more so than in the art of goalkeeping, which was outlined by the Spanish national team's goalkeeper coach, César Arcones, during one of the practical sessions. As fitness parameters also differ substantially in terms of the explosive efforts required in futsal, the Portuguese national team's fitness coach, José Luís Mendes, offered the participants an in-depth

review of training techniques related to warm-ups, stretching, endurance, speed, strength and coordination – fundamental questions in a discipline where players can expect to run approximately half the distance covered by the average player in the outdoor game but invest more heavily in high-speed running (7+ metres per second) and average 2m/second over an entire game. *"The aim,"* he told the participants, *"is to attain maximum levels of performance and efficiency with a minimum expenditure of energy."*

The master classes continued with Braz demonstrating how to plan, organise and manage a futsal training session and with Menichelli conducting sessions aimed at improving individual skills and then applying them to genuine game situations. Thomas Neumann, head coach of the Czech Republic's senior team, then addressed issues attached to the use of power-play with the flying goalkeeper. It has to be said that the Czech Under-19 team was somewhat overawed to work with such illustrious technicians, including the current champion of Europe.

From UEFA's point of view, a major objective in Prague was to get feedback from the national associations about their readiness to implement the 123-hour UEFA Futsal B diploma courses once they were officially rolled out for the start of the 2014/15 season, accompanied by UEFA guidelines and over 200 pages of practical information set out in a new manual to be distributed along with a DVD featuring some 150 clips of training and match play. The response from the national associations was overwhelmingly positive in terms of immediate or near-future implementation of the futsal licence, with UEFA ready to offer tailor-made assistance in the creation of courses from July. As Petr Fousek said, *"this is a big step forward for futsal"*. ●

*With Italy's Futsal EURO 2014 celebrations on screen behind him, UEFA's chief technical officer, Ioan Lupescu, addresses the audience in Prague*



# THE GLOVES ARE OFF

It might seem more logical to say the gloves are on for an article about goalkeeper coaching, but a dictionary definition of ‘the gloves are off’ tells us that if the gloves come off, you start fighting or competing hard to achieve something.

And that can certainly be applied to the official roll-out in July of the new UEFA Goalkeeper A licence. The 20-page guideline document is now available and it states in the preamble that “the key aim is to provide all associations with clear principles and criteria that will assist them in creating their own UEFA advanced goalkeeper coach education courses”. It also recalls that, “traditionally, head coaches recruited former colleagues or goalkeepers who had just retired or were coming to the end of their playing careers. Most of these goalkeeping coaches had technical knowledge and awareness of the specialised needs of the professional goalkeeper, but many lacked general coaching skills.” One of the objectives of the new UEFA licence is therefore to integrate the ‘GK Coach’ more closely into the coaching family.

As outlined in our previous issue, the development of the UEFA Goalkeeper A licence can be traced back to a decision taken in February 2011 and a number of pilot courses and seminars conducted over the last three seasons, during which the draft guidelines were put to the test and fine-tuned. The prime movers were Packie Bonner (Republic of Ireland), Marc Van Geersom (Belgium) and Frans Hoek (Netherlands), with help from Scotland’s Jim Stewart and the English FA – the latter providing the facilities for filming the DVD that accompanies the guidelines.

“When we started the process and the work on the guidelines, it was fairly new to most countries,” Bonner recalls. “We knew it was going to be a slow process, because we knew there was a diversity in cultures and a diversity in the way that people think about learning. That’s logical. Everybody had different views on the hierarchies within a club and where the goalkeeper coach fits in. So our aim was simply

to find a formula which would allow the goalkeeper coach to be better qualified and better equipped to make the team better.”

The former Republic of Ireland international underlines the relevance of the changes which have reshaped the goalkeeper’s role in recent times. “We set out to focus on reality-based learning and the concept of the goalkeeper coach being an integral part of the staff. We wanted to look at the work parameters and realised that in most countries the concept of goalkeeper coach was someone who would be working with the keepers in a reduced area of the pitch. We wanted an innovative approach appropriate to the current trend of using the goalkeeper as a team member with an important role to play in building from the back – not just playing short passes with a view to initiating possession plays, but also developing the criteria to mix this with more direct supply to the front and the ability to play a role in launching counterattacks. There’s more examination of the contribution the goalkeeper can make according to the team and the style of play or the circumstances. If you’re defending deep in the away leg of a tie, for example, you won’t require that much extra from the keeper in comparison with his traditional role or need him to be able to provide direct supply to the front rather than building short from the back. In the return leg, if you’re chasing a result, you might want a very different contribution from your goalkeeper as an integral part of the team. So the coach has to prepare the goalkeeper for this role as well. The different parameters strongly suggested that the goalkeeper coach needed to act in a different way, so the question was to find out how, and how the goalkeeper coach could best work with the other coaches. We started looking around Europe and getting feedback about what was happening in different countries.”

The result is a comprehensive course comprising a minimum of 120 hours, of which at least 84 need to be dedicated to practical sessions on the pitch, including work experience and study visits. The guidelines propose a maximum of 16 participants per course, led by a minimum of two tutors. “Introducing a new licence inevitably raises questions about whether you have enough tutors for the coach education courses,” Bonner comments. “I always think that it’s one thing to be a goalkeeper, another thing to be a goalkeeper coach, and another thing again to be a goalkeeper coach educator. As an active goalkeeper, you’re basically quite egocentric and like to do things your own way. But to be a goalkeeper coach you need to acquire the knowledge and skills of a

FC Bayern München’s goalkeeper coach, Toni Tapalović, tests Manuel Neuer, while second keeper Tom Starke takes a breather in the background







coach in order to be able to do the job properly. As a coach you learn that it's all about the players rather than yourself – and that includes the goalkeepers in your squad. And as a goalkeeper coach educator it's another step completely, because you need to add other qualities."

The shortage of suitable educators in some national associations is one of the hurdles the new UEFA licence will need to surmount in its early days. "Many don't have specialist tutors but are ready to go – and we're ready to support them. We also have checklists to be able to monitor progress on a uniform basis. Norway, Denmark, Belgium, England, Scotland...there are a lot of associations who are ready to go, albeit with a few adaptations in some cases. We've even considered the idea of bringing together students from different countries – maybe three from six countries to make a group of 18 working in various venues and at clubs. So an educational structure based on tutors and outside consultants from UEFA is not totally out of the question.

"It's a big task for us, as representatives of UEFA, to help to educate the tutors. It undoubtedly requires a different slant on things. This is something that has to be done in cooperation with the national associations, where current scenarios are very diverse. Some of the tutors are part-time, carrying out their coach education jobs in conjunction with work at clubs or academies. The reality-based approach to the diploma courses requires a lot more time and this could be an issue that associations will need to address," Bonner says.

"The reactions during the pilot courses were very positive," he adds. "We were changing and modifying all along the way – but that's the idea of pilot courses. That's why the feedback from everybody concerned was absolutely essential in terms of helping to get things right. Clubs will be

asked to take on board the elements entailed in the reality-based parts of the course – and this will have an impact. So there will have to be good dialogue between clubs and associations before the licence can be properly rolled out. It means that a goalkeeper coach may have a mentoring task as an additional role. This is something that we are discussing with a view to coming up with solutions to help address these issues."

Bonner freely acknowledges that changing the perception that the goalkeeper coach's role is something of a sideshow is not something that can be achieved overnight. "It entails a change of mentality within the coaching profession. People tend to think that what we've been doing in the past is how we should carry on doing it in the future. There's a degree of resistance to change and a bit of a fear factor in there as well. We have to provide solid, logical reasons for a shift in attitudes and convince people that, this way, we'll be producing better goalkeepers. But it will take time to get this message across to the head coaches, the assistant coaches...the people who are the bosses of the coaching team. This is going to be a slow process. There is great interest in getting the UEFA licence as a goalkeeper coach but we also want to integrate this person in the best possible way into the coaching staff.

"The best way is to demonstrate with full information and evidence that the goalkeeper coach can join the other coaches in making input into the tactical approach to the game. We know the important thing is to help the goalkeeper to produce 'The Big Saves'. To do that, there are technical elements and mental elements, so you need to look at the whole game. The goalkeeper coach has to calculate how he handles the technical side, how to approach the physical side, how to approach the tactical side and how best he can work with the rest of the coaches. That's what this course is about." ●

Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart stretches himself to the max in a 1 v 1 with Lionel Messi in UEFA Champions League action against FC Barcelona

# A NEW DIMENSION WITH THE UEFA YOUTH LEAGUE



FC Barcelona's Juanma Garcia takes on Arsenal FC's Chuba Akpom during their magnificent quarter-final tie

*"It was fantastic for the boys. But it was also fantastic for the technical staff – an experience which makes you improve a lot on all levels. It was a test for the club and all of its infrastructures. For the coaching team, the medical team, the media department, the administration... It was an important international competition and it was good to experience the demands it put you under."* These were the words of Jordi Vinyals, head coach of the FC Barcelona side which, after defeating FC Schalke 04 in the semi-final and SL Benfica in the final, emerged as the first champions of the UEFA Youth League. The coaches who were involved in the competition – which ran in parallel with the UEFA Champions League through group games and a knockout phase – heaped unanimous praise on its value to their Under-19 players as an educational experience, but also in terms of its value to themselves as members of the coaching profession.

To earn their trip to Nyon to compete in the final four, Vinyals' team had been made to work hard by Steve Gattings' Arsenal FC. *"This has been a learning curve for the boys,"* Gattings said, after two late goals had defeated his side in

the Catalan capital. *"Every team we've played has been slightly different, has played with a different style and has given us different problems. Different from the English leagues the boys have been playing in up till now. It has also been a very good experience for me. Obviously you look back at the games, you analyse them and you think about what more you might have told the boys about the best way to beat the opponents. In that game against Barcelona, we set out to press them high – and at the start it worked. But you need to have a plan B when it doesn't work. You need to help the boys to understand the times to press and the times not to press. You also learn about playing in bigger stadiums. And it helps the boys to think about the game. As a team, I think we became more aware of the importance of tactics and finding ways of breaking the opposition down. We also pinpointed some defensive qualities that we needed to continue to work on. When you play against some of the best teams in Europe, you can demonstrate with practical examples that you get punished if you're a bit naive in defence. So that was a learning curve for me, as well as for the players."*

Barça's opponents in the semi-finals in Nyon were an FC Schalke 04 side which had raised eyebrows with a 3–1 away win over Chelsea FC. The English club's head coach, Dermot Drummy, gave credit to the role played by his opposite number, Norbert Elgert: *"They were a quality side and their coach had done his homework on us. They blocked us off centrally and hit us hard on the counter."*

Elgert also lauded the value of the UEFA Youth League experience: *"Starting when you travel with the senior professionals during the group stage of the competition, you learn how everything works and you get an insight into the pressures. It helped the lads to develop further by being able to compete with so many playing styles and philosophies. It helps them to advance in their profession and it was an enriching experience for me as a coach."*

Another former pro, Luis Miguel Ramis, was in charge of the Real Madrid CF side beaten by SL Benfica in the semi-finals. *"Perhaps the biggest thing is to experience the way things are organised and planned and how a game at the highest level unfolds. You grow up in a footballing sense because you go through big matches and come across opponents who really test your abilities,"* Ramis said.

His view was echoed by João Tralhão, head coach of the SL Benfica side which took the silver medal after defeating Ramis' team in the semi-finals and giving FC Barcelona a more serious testing in the final than the 3–0 scoreline might suggest. *"You look to win the competition but, as a coach, you need to recognise that the*



objective is to provide a good environment for the players at a time when they are on the threshold of a professional career. I think this objective was very successfully achieved," said Tralhão, a long-standing member of the youth-coaching set-up at the Portuguese club.

Vinyals, the champion coach, was anxious to play down his own contribution. "It worked out for us because I had very good players," he insisted. "Not because of me as the coach. The challenge for me was that four or five players had left the team because of their age, and then seven or eight players in this age group were promoted directly into our second-team squad. So I had to put together a new team for this competition. It wasn't easy but many of the players had known each other for some time and the UEFA Youth League gave me an opportunity to make the team more compact as a unit, to help it to grow in stature and to be equipped to deal with difficult situations."

Vinyals went on to highlight the relevance, at youth level, of a well-established club philosophy. "I think we won the competition because we knew our strengths, we knew the style of football we wanted to play and we knew the club's long-standing philosophy. With regard to the contribution by the coaching staff, we always insisted on Pep Guardiola's obsession with focusing exclusively on the next match. Sometimes we didn't have that much material to work on, but we always tried to show the players different things about the teams we were going to face. Going to different countries to play different

teams with different cultures has been valuable for all of us. We've benefited from travelling with the first team and we've all had a taste of learning how to deal with an important international match during the week and then a domestic match at the weekend. I think that these players will compete at the highest level and, if they do, this is the sort of thing they will have to cope with. During the season I could see that they were learning a lot, not only on the technical and tactical levels, but also on a psychological level. Maybe more importantly, I could see them maturing as human beings as well."

Reflecting on the competition, Vinyals mused about the possibility of allowing coaches to make additional substitutions in squads where "the lads are only 16, 17 or 18 years old and their bodies are not used to competing in matches like these, played with extraordinarily high intensity". His main satisfaction – apart from travelling back to Barcelona with the trophy – was, however, taking part in a magnificent competition: "Unfortunately, I'm not so familiar with the Champions League for senior teams, but this experience has been fundamental. Above all, it was great to see the commitment, the enthusiasm and the joy of all the different coaching staff communicating with each other thanks to these matches. All the coaches from all the clubs we met on the way to the final made us really feel that we were sharing a general European culture. UEFA has done a great job by introducing this competition." ●

SL Benfica's Nuno Santos strikes a penalty during the semi-final in Nyon



# LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD

Among the many innovations being introduced by UEFA on the coaching front is the decision to produce a technical report on the UEFA Europa League, with a view to bringing it further into line with its big brother, the UEFA Champions League. To contribute ideas and opinions, teams of technical observers captained by Sir Alex Ferguson and UEFA's chief technical officer, Ioan Lupescu, attended the two men's club competition finals, while the latter also observed the women's final in Lisbon, together with former Swiss national team coach Béatrice von Siebenthal. Technical reports on the European Under-17 Championship, plus the men's and women's Under-19 tournaments, will also be available online, on UEFA.com and UEFA.org, to provide a permanent record of the events and to offer data that we hope will be of help to coaches involved in developing the top players of the future. The findings will also be transferred into educational content for future coaches. In the meantime, these are the coaches who, since our last issue, have taken gold and silver medals in UEFA competitions, with special mention of Jorge Vilda who, after leading Spain to second place in the European Women's Under-17 Championship, did likewise at the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup in Costa Rica. In chronological order, this is the roll of honour:

## **European Women's Under-17 Championship in England**

**Germany v Spain 1–1 (3–1 in penalty shoot-out)**

Gold: Anouschka Bernhard  
Silver: Jorge Vilda

## **UEFA Futsal EURO 2014 in Belgium**

**Italy v Russia 3–1**

Gold: Roberto Menichelli  
Silver: Sergei Skorovich

*FC Barcelona, with coach Jordi Vinyals on the left, celebrate victory in the first-ever UEFA Youth League*

## **UEFA Youth League in Nyon**

**FC Barcelona v SL Benfica 3–0**

Gold: Jordi Vinyals  
Silver: João Tralhão

## **European Under-17 Championship in Malta**

**England v Netherlands 1–1 (4–1 in penalty shoot-out)**

Gold: John Peacock  
Silver: Maarten Stekelenburg

## **UEFA Europa League in Turin**

**Sevilla FC v SL Benfica 0–0 (4–2 in penalty shoot-out)**

Gold: Unai Emery  
Silver: Jorge Jesus

## **UEFA Women's Champions League in Lisbon (Estádio do Restelo)**

**VfL Wolfsburg v Tyresö FF 4–3**

Gold: Ralf Kellermann  
Silver: Tony Gustavsson

## **UEFA Champions League in Lisbon (Estádio da Luz)**

**Real Madrid CF v Club Atlético de Madrid 4–1 (after extra time)**

Gold: Carlo Ancelotti  
Silver: Diego Simeone. ●



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