

# THE TECHNICIAN

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**NEWSLETTER  
FOR COACHES**

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## IMPRESSUM

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Bayern Munich's Luca Toni, tries to get away from John Mensah of Olympique Lyonnais on the final matchday in the Champions League group stage. Bayern won 3-2, but both teams qualified for the first knockout round.

(Photo: Flash Press)

**Paulo Sousa learned a great deal from his coaches before beginning his own career as a technician.**

# EVALUATING COACHES

## EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,  
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Warren Mersereau, a long-time friend of mine and a business partner of Bayern Munich's Jürgen Klinsmann, contacted me recently to tell me about a study which was carried out in the US by the NFL (i.e. gridiron's National Football League). The aim of the exercise was to find out what the players – those powerful men who wear helmets, heavy padding and full-body uniforms – thought about their coaches.

The vast majority of the players (1,400 to be exact) responded to the questionnaire and the findings were good news for the NFL, with 90% saying that they respected their head coach, three-quarters confirming that they trusted their coach and 79% declaring that their coach was top quality. More than 50% of the players surveyed said that their professional coach was the most influential coach in their lives. The NFL players went on to identify communication skills, motivational ability, approachability, management acumen and a capacity to lead by example as the most desirable attributes in a head coach. This interesting feedback from NFL players provides a reminder that coaches in all professional sports are always under scrutiny and are constantly being evaluated by fans, media, other coaches and, of course, their players.

During recent UEFA coaching events, we addressed the issue of the coach as a leader and examined the qualities that followers (i.e. players) look for in a football boss. A star guest at these meetings was Paulo Sousa, the Portuguese midfielder who won the UEFA Champions League with both Juventus and Borussia Dortmund. Paulo, now the head coach of Queens Park Rangers in England, shared with UEFA's frontline technicians his experience as a player working with a number of elite coaches. During these sessions he highlighted the main things he had gained from his illustrious coaches. "Carlos Queiroz gave me the mentality

to be a winner, to reach the top. Sven-Goran Eriksson at Benfica increased my confidence and inspired me to be a successful professional. Marcello Lippi at Juventus made me think about the game by constantly questioning me about tactics after training sessions or matches. And Ottmar Hitzfeld at Dortmund encouraged me and gave me the responsibility to be a leader on the pitch", said the former Portuguese international, who concluded by saying: "Three things help you to develop into a top player: the level of the competition, the quality of your teammates and the ability of your coach."

Paulo's statement also applies to youth football, and the influence of the coach on young, promising talents cannot be over-emphasised. I once asked some national youth team players what qualities they looked for in a coach. Honesty, approachability, patience and fairness were among the main attributes on the wish list, while passion, ability to read the game, the communication skills to handle one-to-one relationships, football coaching expertise, the strength to demand and set high standards, and the football-human qualities of a role model were also highlighted. Even youth players know what they need and are willing to make judgements on the capacity of their mentors and guides.

At professional level, when the team is winning and a player is in the starting line-up, then the coach usually gets pass marks. But when the tactics sometimes fail to deliver, or the substitutions don't quite have the desired effect, or the new signing doesn't impress the squad members, doubts about the coach's ability begin to surface. In the wise words of Sir Bobby Robson: "The coach today must be a good judge of a player, because nothing beats signing a new man and knowing that the players are impressed with the new acquisition. Your reputation can depend on your judgement of a player, on your ability in the transfer market."

In the "bullring" of football management, it is one thing to be judged harshly by supporters or the media, but it is a sad state of affairs when coaches publicly criticise their colleagues. One of the best statements on this unacceptable behaviour was made by Otto Rehhagel following

his triumph with Greece at EURO 2004. The German master coach said at the time: "During the tournament in Portugal, Dick Advocaat was being heavily criticised in Holland by players and even coaches – so much so, that he left the coaches' association. If I have to talk about a fellow coach, I prefer to keep my mouth shut unless I can find something positive to say. I find it difficult to swallow that coaches criticise a colleague in a destructive manner via TV. We should never publicly criticise the way a colleague is working." (The footnote to this quote is a reminder that Dick Advocaat, currently head coach of FC Zenit St. Petersburg, won the 2008 UEFA Cup and UEFA Super Cup for his Russian employers).

But back to the players. They will inevitably evaluate their coaches and it is important for each coach to be aware of their players' expectations and needs – not to appease them or accede to their demands, but to understand each individual and to provide strong, appropriate leadership. Recently, in a BBC interview, Cesc Fabregas of Arsenal FC voiced his opinion about his coach, Arsène Wenger: "The only three people I owe something to in my life are my dad, my mother and Arsène Wenger. I'm living a dream, and he [Arsène Wenger] gave me my opportunity at the age of 16." I think it would be safe to assume that it's not just in the NFL that players appreciate their coaches. Given the chance, I'm sure that elite European footballers would be equally fulsome in their praise of those who coach, manage and lead them in today's professional game.



Cesc Fabregas holds his coach, Arsène Wenger, in high esteem.



Pizzoli/AFP/Getty Images

MARCELLO LIPPI

## MARCELLO LIPPI

N°35 • January 2007

**Technician:** From a coach's perspective, what does it take to win either the UEFA Champions League or the World Cup?

*"The most important thing is to have the ability to involve top-level players. There is very little a coach can do if he can't count on top players – you need quality players to produce results. So it is about recruitment, selection and the ability to gel those players into an effective team. The more stars you have in the team, the more you need to work hard to bring the group together, to make the team compact and in total harmony. You have to make each player feel equally useful, but not indispensable. Every time I start working with a team, the first thing I emphasise is that a team is made up of people who respect each other and who place themselves at each other's service. If nobody acts like a prima donna, then the group is destined to achieve great results. By contrast, if all the players cater to their own self interest, it is going to be rather difficult; you will have some spectacular moments of football, but in the end the teams which have a 'we' mentality will prevail."*

## SIR ALEX FERGUSON

N°34 • October 2006

**Technician:** What are the main qualities required by a coach at the top level?

*"I have thought about that a lot, and there are a number of things. As I progressed as a coach, I learned that observation was vital. To coach and watch at the same time is difficult. If you are involved too much in the coaching, you miss many things. I started to delegate more things to my assistant and to*

**UEFA'S TECHNICIAN NEWSLETTER HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR 12 YEARS. IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN MARCH 1997 AND INCLUDED A DISCUSSION BETWEEN RINUS MICHELS AND BERTI VOGTS WHICH TOOK PLACE AT THE POST EURO 96 NATIONAL COACHES CONFERENCE IN COPENHAGEN. OVER THE YEARS, AND 40 EDITIONS LATER, A NUMBER OF HIGH-PROFILE TECHNICIANS HAVE BEEN INTERVIEWED, OFFERING WORDS OF WISDOM TO THEIR COACHING COLLEAGUES. TO CELEBRATE THE 12TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PUBLICATION AND TO GIVE A FLAVOUR OF THE CONTENT, 12 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARE REPRINTED WITH THE NOSTALGIC ENTHUSIASM THAT PROMPTS A POP GROUP TO PRODUCE A COMPILATION CD OF ITS PREVIOUS HITS. OUR THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:**

# "12 TOP TECHNICIANS"

*stand back sometimes. Observation is definitely an important issue in order to make sure that the quality is high and that you get out of a training session what you want. Next, I think you need*



Getty Images

SIR ALEX FERGUSON

*perseverance because coaching at the top today is not an easy job. If you come in on a Monday morning after a defeat and you lack this quality of perseverance, then it will show and that will affect the players. So on Monday morning, you have the 'fire in the belly'; you are ready. The passion has to come out. I also think that a top coach needs an imagination. When people ask you what was your best ever goal as a coach, you want to identify a perfect goal that you influenced. It is about your imagination, inculcated into a training session, and which the players take on board. They then do it by habit. I remember as a young coach teaching take-overs in important areas of the pitch which was unusual at the time. So you put this imagination into a player's mind, and he can*



Hassestein/Bullgaris/Getty Images

OTTMAR HITZFELD

then take it to another level, because he realises that you both want to try things. You create a chain reaction which produces thinking players, and this is a wonderful thing to develop. It is also important to have simple communication. You see those training sessions where the coach is talking all the time and the message is lost – the words get lost in the wind. Keep it simple, be brief, but be decisive. Make it perfectly clear what you are after in a session. Remember when we were players – we were standing there and we wanted to get on with it and the coach was rambling on. Talking too much is a big danger for a coach.”

## OTTMAR HITZFELD

**N° 16 • December 2001**

**Technician: How has football changed since you started coaching in 1983?**

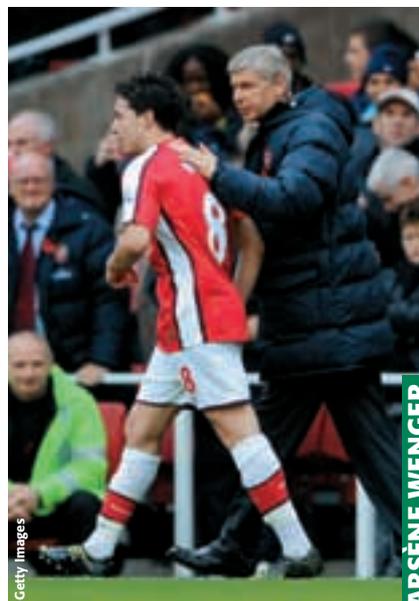
“The game has definitely become faster, and this has put great demands on the players, both physically and technically. The players today must accept a professional lifestyle and work hard at all aspects of their game. Even defenders have had to improve their technical skills because it is imperative that they take part in the build-up play. Everything has improved, including the medical treatment. Pressure has also increased, and sponsors/commercial people want results. The players are stars and all of them must handle the media – every day we are confronted by five TV stations. To add to all of this, I need to be a psychologist, dealing with millionaire players who all have their own demands and pressures. The Bosman Ruling has changed the attitude of the players – money has become their priority and agents make them crazy. Another aspect of the Bosman situation has been the movement of players across borders, but we at Bayern have the ambition to have as many German players in the team as possible. The youth programme has therefore become even more important to us.”

## ARSÈNE WENGER

**N° 26 • November 2004**

**Technician: You have a great ‘eye’ for a player – what do you like to see in a young player?**

“Motivation and intelligence are the two main elements, because I believe you need minimal intelligence (do you know why you make a mistake?), and a desire to become better. The talent aspect is not enough, because what makes a career depends on how much you want to be somebody, and are you intelligent enough to understand what you can do with the talent you have? If you look around you, you will see that most top players are intelligent – they have to be because it is not easy to manage a career. Ideally you want to have a player who has everything. Our game at Arsenal is based on technique and movement – that means I look at the pace of the player and his technical level. These elements don’t always go with power or physical commitment, but we want our game to be very mobile and very fast, therefore we need a good technique and to be able to move quickly. Of course, you want power and physical presence, but the priorities for me are pace and technique.”



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ARSÈNE WENGER



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FABIO CAPELLO

## FABIO CAPELLO

**N° 14 • January 2001**

**Technician: How would you describe your style of coaching?**

“I think I am a mixture between a coach and a manager; I like entering the managerial/administrative part of the club, and I don’t want to be isolated by only taking care of the technical side. I like to be involved in everything that happens at the club. A little bit like the English. I believe wholeheartedly in hard work, group spirit and discipline. I always say that if a player has discipline, respects his colleagues and works in a serious way, good results will be achieved. Otherwise, positive results may still be achieved but only in the short term. It’s the system and the way you work which allows you to win on a continuous basis. You win by remaining concentrated, determined and disciplined. It’s not necessarily a rigid sort of discipline. I am talking about disciplined respect; respect for the coach, respect for colleagues, and respect for the people who pay us. Regarding playing methods, it depends a lot on the type of players I have. If, for example, I can work with fast, strong-minded players, I can adopt a very different approach – while still implementing my personal style.”



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ROY HODGSON

## ROY HODGSON

**N°36 • June 2007**

**Technician: In your opinion, what are the significant trends in top-level European football, from both a tactical and managerial perspective?**

*From a managerial perspective, the trend is for a coach to be judged more quickly and more harshly than in the past. Because of that, there is little scope for a coach to develop his philosophy or his management style because he might not get the results quickly enough to give him the time. What it has meant, at the highest level, is that the ability to spend money and buy the right players, and to get them to fit in, has become more important than it was in the past when more time was given to the manager to develop the players at his disposal. Today he is being judged more on the quality of his buys than on the standard of work being carried out on a day-to-day basis. From a tactical viewpoint, we could talk about a lot of things but I'll content myself with three. Number one is the importance of the counter-attack and the ability to profit from the turnovers. Secondly, the improvement of athleticism and pace throughout the team. There is no doubt the game is faster and the selection of players reflects this. And thirdly, there is less high-intensity pressing from the front and in advanced areas. This is partly because concern over the interpretation of the offside law has led teams to play deeper. Sides are still compact, but this is mainly in their own half of the pitch.*

## RAFAEL BENITEZ

**N°30 • October 2005**

**Technician: You had a difficult start as a head coach. What advice would you give to those who are starting out?**

*Put simply: you need passion and hours. You need passion and to spend endless hours at developing yourself as a coach. You also have to have faith in your ability. When I was sacked from my first two jobs, one of them after only nine games of the season, I looked for a new job and continued my education. I had a physical education degree, including four years of specialisation in football, and all my life I had been in sport, so it was my business. I remember my second agent telling me that it would be difficult to get a new job after two sackings. Without hesitation I told him I would be in the first division. My wife was also very supportive during those difficult days. When I went on my study tour to Italy, England and Brazil, I asked a lot of questions to the coaches I met, like Fabio Capello. If you don't know something, you must look for the answers. You must do the right things in order to win and this means knowing what works – it is not just about theory, but about being practical and flexible. In my parents' house alone, I had 1,500 videos, with three matches on each, and I used to analyse the details of the games. That was ten years ago. Now I use the computer and I have all the DVDs at our training ground. I suppose you could say, all things considered, that I am a student of the game.*



Getty Images

RAFAEL BENITEZ

## JÜRGEN KLINSMANN

**N°32 • April 2006**

**Technician: Who have been the biggest influences on you as a player and as a coach?**

*I was very lucky. For almost 18 years as a professional player, I worked with people like Franz Beckenbauer and Berti Vogts, both World Cup winners and successful coaches. I also worked with Otto Rehhagel, Giovanni Trapattoni, Ossie Ardiles, César Luís Menotti, Arsène Wenger – an amazing number of high-profile coaches.*



Vogel/Bongarts/Getty Images

JÜRGEN KLINSMANN

*And I picked up something from them all. I learned a lot from Arie Haan during my time in Stuttgart, and with Arsène Wenger at Monaco, such as the way to handle people and to be respectful because the person comes first. I am very thankful for the opportunities I have had. Each coach had his own style and I learned from them that it is much more than just thinking about the result at the end of the week. If I think back to my time in the national team, I was impressed by Franz Beckenbauer's easy way of handling things and how he was always positive. Above all, he was incredibly charismatic. Berti Vogts was such a detailed worker – he was extremely*



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well prepared for every training session. Arie Haan was very influential in my early years, but all the others gave me something. The way Arsène Wenger developed players was very impressive – at the time in Monaco, I often wondered why he did certain things but then later I would see the positive results of his work with particular players.

## CARLOS PARREIRA

**N° 18 • August 2002**

**Technician: What is your view of today's stars?**

"We have a very romantic view of this: football is still, and will always be, a game of technique and skills. It is a game of talents. It is not everybody who can be a singer. It is not everybody who can be a painter (incidentally, I am a painter myself). So this is football: a game of talent, of technique, of skills, of art. However, we cannot live outside the modern game – it is not enough to have technique and skills. We need organisation, we must know how to defend and attack, we must be fit. But I believe that to reach the highest level you must have stars – without stars you are nothing. The stars make the difference in the game – one solo effort, one free-kick, etc. When we talk about stars, I don't like those who just make smoke, I like those who make fire, the ones who perform. It is a problem for the coach to deal with those who play for themselves – a lot of smoke, but no fire. The stars who do create the fire are those who make the difference for the team, they are the real stars."



Sportsfile

CARLOS PARREIRA

## JOSÉ MOURINHO

**N° 27 • January 2005**

**Technician: How would you describe your style as a coach?**

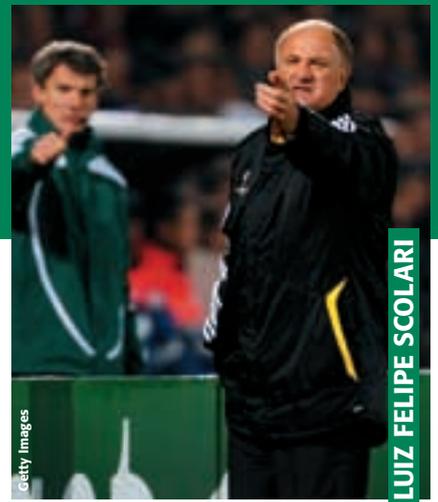
"I think it has been an evolution – I am different today than I was five years ago. When it comes to games, I am much more analytical during the first half because at half-time I need to help my team. It is difficult to communicate with the players during a top match so I don't shout too much but I do take notes, but only in the first half. The second half I can analyse at home. During the half-time team talk, I try to control my emotions and to be what the team needs me to be – this means that I can be very cool or I can be very emotional because the team needs a certain response from me. There is always a certain emotional component as well as a tactical contribution. There is always something to tell the team at half-time, but after the match not one word, because the players are not ready to be analytical at that moment. Overall, I would say that I have a flexible management style, although I am very demanding during training. I have always been lucky to have more than one pitch at my training centre, and I therefore prepare my sessions in such a way that I can jump from one situation to another with effective working time high and resting time very low. We go for quality and high intensity during short periods. Players want to work, whether it is in Portugal, England or Spain, as long as the training is well organised and serious, and they know the purpose of the exercise."

## LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI

**N° 21 • June 2003**

**Technician: What do you see as the main differences between South American and European football?**

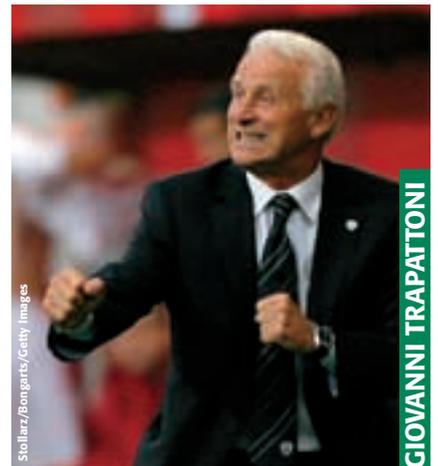
"Football in Europe has an emphasis on physical strength, marking, collective play while in South America there is a greater freedom of expression,



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LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI

more individuality, and this is often what made the difference in the World Cup, especially for Brazil. With Brazil, we matched the Europeans for teamwork and strength, but the individual quality of the Brazilian players was decisive. Think of Ronaldo's 'toe-poke' against Turkey in the semi-final. This was solo play at its best."



Stollarz/Bongarts/Ceity Images

GIOVANNI TRAPATTONI

## GIOVANNI TRAPATTONI

**N° 23 • January 2004**

**Technician: When your coaching career does come to an end (many years from now), how would you like to be remembered?**

"Firstly, I would like to be remembered as someone with the human touch. Secondly, as a coach who always kept up-to-date with the trends in football. As I become older, I always try to remain young, professionally speaking. I worked with many great players; Platini was one of the best, and tried to use their abilities to produce a football that was physical, positive and highly technical. However, I have always been a realist. Sometimes I had to make changes in order to produce a result – this does not necessarily mean that I was defensive, just that I was adaptable and very pragmatic."



**THE GERMAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION, REPRESENTED BY ITS PRESIDENT AT THE TIME, EGIDIUS BRAUN, WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO SIGN THE UEFA COACHING CONVENTION IN JANUARY 1998.**

# A CONVENTIONAL APPROACH

**THE ENDORSEMENT BY UEFA’S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MONTENEGRO AS A B-LEVEL SIGNATORY TO THE UEFA COACHING CONVENTION MEANS THAT THE CIRCLE HAS NOW BEEN COMPLETED. ALL 53 ASSOCIATIONS ARE NOW PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION.**

Completing the circle, however, is no excuse for drawing a line under the convention nor for resting on laurels. It lays a milestone in an on-going project, but there is still a long road ahead. The coaching convention dates back to a working group set up in 1991, a decision taken by the Executive Committee in 1994, and a working project which started in 1997 and formally came to life when Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain put their signatures to the document in Ghent on 17 January 1998. The convention

was envisaged as a tool to upgrade coach education structures to clearly defined levels, to set benchmarks and, as a spin-off, to facilitate cross-border movements among the European coaching fraternity – something which has become much more commonplace since the birth of the convention.

Over the years, the convention has provided a magnificent platform for the interchange of information and expertise, with specialists visiting member associations to assess and

assist – efforts which have been supplemented by workshops and UEFA coach educators’ courses. In other words, it hasn’t just been a question of fulfilling the conditions set out in the convention but has also generated a positive energy field around it. All parties to the convention – even the founders who’ve been involved for over a decade – continue to participate via the three-yearly cycles of re-assessment, which serve to monitor current status and guarantee the credibility of the whole project.

However, one of the nice things about the coaching convention is that its success has led to the creation of two other projects which are also based on offering UEFA endorsements if pre-determined criteria are fulfilled by national associations.

The first sibling saw the light of day at the turn of the century – and has grown at enormous pace. No fewer than 37 national associations are now signatories to the grassroots convention, with five more candidates currently under evaluation. Whereas the coaching convention focuses mainly on the individual qualifications acquired by technicians, the grassroots version focuses exclusively on the national associations and the programmes they organise or supervise.



Coach educators courses are an important part of the coaching convention programme.

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
SPANISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
AND UEFA VICE-PRESIDENT,  
ANGEL MARIA VILLAR LLONA, SIGNS  
THE REFEREES' CONVENTION.**



UEFA-pjwoods.ch



**Physical  
training session  
for referees.**

Sportsfile

Unlike the coaching convention, the grassroots project is based on a star system, akin to the ratings given in the hotel sector. At the moment, 23 associations are signatories at the basic one-star level, above which additional stars are awarded for more advanced programmes in four areas: social and disability, registered participants, girls' and women's projects, and promotion and growth. Already, 14 associations have acquired additional stars and 2009 should offer the first examples of associations offered a sixth star for activities at superior level – and the summit is a seventh star awarded to associations whose grassroots activities are rated as Outstanding with a capital O.

The youngest of UEFA's endorsement projects is the referee convention, aimed at upgrading education and organisation in all the spheres related to match officials. In other words, it is not aimed exclusively at referees, but also at assistant referees, fourth

officials, liaison officers, refereeing administrators, referee observers and referee instructors. The overall objective is the standardisation of referee education and the structures put in place for the organisation of refereeing, along with the aim of defining and unifying the match officials' professional and legal status. Again, UEFA's role is to provide guidelines, to support national associations and to offer endorsement when criteria have been met.

In this newest of the three conventions, specialist knowledge is being supplied by a Referee Guidelines Panel and a Referee Certification Panel based on, in both cases, members proposed by the UEFA Referees Committee. The fact that the other two conventions were up and running has helped the third one to get into top gear very quickly and, even though the project has been fully operational for less than three years – the first applications were received early in 2006 – there are already

13 signatory associations (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, Slovenia and Switzerland). Another 35 associations are currently being evaluated as the project reaches cruising speed and, if the Executive Committee approves the proposals, a further group of members could put their signatures to the referee convention at the UEFA Congress to be staged in Copenhagen in March.

In this case, UEFA not only set out the criteria and guidelines but also made funding available to support the ongoing work being done by associations who have satisfied the criteria. This has now been extended to the other two endorsement programmes – and has been very warmly welcomed by the specialists who are working in these key areas where UEFA is wholeheartedly supporting all efforts to enhance standards and to set benchmarks within European football.



Sportsfile

**CARLOS ALBERTO PARREIRA  
AT THE UEFA CONFERENCE IN VIENNA.**

# HOW TO WIN THE WORLD CUP

**GREAT HEADLINE, ISN'T IT? THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO LACK OF INTEREST WHEN CARLOS ALBERTO PARREIRA, WORLD CHAMPION WITH BRAZIL IN 1994, JUMPED ON THE STAGE AT THE UEFA NATIONAL TEAM COACHES CONFERENCE IN VIENNA TO MAKE A PRESENTATION BEARING THAT RIVETING TITLE TO AN AUDIENCE OF COACHES WHO ARE NOW ACCELERATING THEIR TEAMS INTO THE FINAL LAPS IN THE RACE TO QUALIFY FOR THE 2010 FIFA WORLD CUP FINALS IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

Carlos certainly knows his way around the world of national team football. Apart from Brazil, he's taken charge in Ghana, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and South Africa. And, as he was quick to point out, he's learned that there's no secret formula, no magic potion and that the title of the presentation he has now allowed UEFA to publish on our website might easily be "How To Have a Half-Decent Chance of Winning the World Cup". Let's face it, if you ask the winners of World Cups, EUROs or UEFA Champions Leagues to name a key factor, they might well mention "a smile from Lady Luck in a penalty shoot-out."

Indeed, the list of past winners reveals that there's no common denominator in terms of personality. How do you compare Sir Alf Ramsey with César Luís Menotti; Enzo Bearzot with Franz Beckenbauer? On the other hand, it is interesting to look for traits that Carlos has shared with Aimé Jacquet, Luiz Felipe Scolari and Marcello Lippi, the technicians who have followed him to the top of the world podium.

Carlos expresses admiration for Germany's 1954 champion Sepp Herberger, who developed tactical discipline along with physical and mental strength, aiming to attack and defend with maximum efficiency. Carlos admits to finding inspiration in some of Sepp Herberger's strikingly simple statements such as "the ball is round" and "the game lasts 90 minutes" because those stripped-down concepts are an invitation to reflect on what the game of football is about.

Flicking through the pages of World Cup history, Carlos traces trends through the winners: the birth of 'art football' in 1958 based on the Brazilians' outstanding technical ability, the play-and-don't-let-them-play philosophy of Sir Alf Ramsey's winger-less England in 1966, the quality and team balance of Brazil in 1970, the compact German unit which overcame Total Football in 1974, the

different styles which took Argentina to the summit in 1978 and 1986, and the tactical, counter-attacking excellencies of the Italian sides which triumphed in 1982 and 2006.

The question is whether today's ambitious national team coach needs a compendium of all those qualities or whether a winning team can be built on a small number of them, yet be prepared to cope with opponents who base their footballing cuisine on different ingredients. Carlos believes that a successful team needs to be built on the foundations of the country's culture, history and traditions. He quotes César Luís Menotti: "You have to understand that, if you are a musician and you don't know who Beethoven was, you are lost. If I ignore my past, I cannot plan my present or my future." On the other hand, Argentine football has, in recent times, diverged into two schools of thought spearheaded by their two World Cup winners – and Carlos Bilardo maintains "there is no Argentine style: to win is the only thing that matters."

In modern-day Europe, the theme is by no means irrelevant. Many of the nations who have expanded UEFA's membership from 31 to 53 in a short space of time may face a need to re-discover their footballing genes. Carlos,



Guercia/AFIP/Getty Images

Carlos Alberto Parreira as coach of South Africa.



**CARLOS ALBERTO PARREIRA  
GIVES HIS PRESENTATION.**



Brazil's Carlos Alberto Parreira and Mario Zagallo with the World Cup.

of course, is steeped in Brazilian culture and philosophy. And he points to Mario Zagallo, four-time World Cup winner as player and coach, as the man who managed to combine method with the Brazilians' traditional fantasy by focusing on off-the-pitch facets. His revolution in 1970 was based on a meticulously planned training programme along with a totally new team infrastructure in which the technical staff was increased from 4 to 12. Although science and technology have been increasingly applied to the game in the last half-century, Carlos admits that it's difficult to equal the 1958 experience in terms of preparation time. "In those days," he remarks, "the Brazilians were in Brazil, so preparations started in February. These days, that is simply impossible."

The challenge facing today's national team coach is that cultures, philosophies and playing concepts need to be implanted in short periods of time and, in many cases, among footballers who, since adolescence, have been playing the game

against completely different cultural backdrops. Technology can assist the modern national team coach in terms of, for example, logging each player's training and match-play workloads via internet, but technology cannot provide national character or team unity.

Carlos therefore maintains that a key element in the coach's work is to evaluate and assess the players who are available and to select those who, in his opinion, can interpret his philosophy. Again, Carlos likes to quote César Luís Menotti: "You need to look for quality and for team players. A good squad is like a symphonic orchestra. You can't manage with violins. You also need pianos, basses, wind instruments and a good maestro."

"The music keeps changing," Carlos reflects. "If you go back to Brazil in 1958, it was essentially a 4-2-4 but Mario Zagallo's ability to attack and defend made it more or less a 4-3-3. When Brazil won it again in 1970, you could

say it was with a 4-5-1 formation. But the five consisted of Clodoaldo and Gerson in the holding roles with Jairzinho, Pelé and Rivelino operating behind Tostão." In 1994, Arrigo Sacchi described Carlos's Brazilian team as "the most organised in their history". It was based on a flat, zonal back four and, as Carlos recalls, "a positional passing game with fast counters and changes of rhythm. It was about zero mistakes and maximum efficiency."

Playing styles come and go – Carlos points out that, at the 1990 finals, 14 of the 24 teams operated with a three-man defence. In 2006, 5 out of 32 used three at the back – a trend underlined at EURO 2008, where only Austria and Greece sporadically opted for this shape. But Carlos insists that the characteristics required by the coach who aspires to win a World Cup have remained fundamentally unchanged. He needs a solid track record, a real football background, along with enough top-level experience to earn credibility in the dressing room. He requires a coherent playing philosophy which he can communicate to the players. His leadership qualities must be channelled into creating a positive ambience. He must always be prepared to, as Carlos puts it, "defend the tribe". He needs to remain composed, focused and graceful under extreme pressure. And he needs to be relaxed and purposeful in his relationships with the media, "even when you get the feeling that it's you versus the rest of the world. There were times, I admit, when I asked myself if it was really worth it. You need to be Robocop..."

Carlos also maintains that, apart from outstanding players, a team capable of winning the World Cup needs "to win outside the field of play. You need a mission, a vision, a target. You need to defend the myths and legends of the country."

Who will successfully do this in South Africa?



Sportsfile

**WILLI RUTTENSTEINER.**

# THE SHARING EXPERIENCE

**A MORE EXTENSIVE SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE AMONG UEFA'S 53 MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS WAS THE OBJECTIVE OF UEFA'S STUDY GROUP SCHEME WHICH WAS LAUNCHED IN JULY AND HAS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING. THE INITIATIVE STEMMED FROM UEFA'S PRESIDENT, MICHEL PLATINI, WITH A VIEW TO ENCOURAGING EVEN MORE TECHNICAL EXCHANGES VIA A 'MAGIC TRIANGLE' FORMED BY UEFA, BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS WHO ACT AS HOSTS AND BY THOSE WHO MAKE UP THE VISITING TEAMS.**

The Study Group Scheme has been designed to support and upgrade football development by encouraging national associations to visit each other within a structured framework. The structure is for a national association to welcome visiting teams – the maximum number is 11 – from three other member associations for a four-day event focused on a specific area within the guidelines laid

down by UEFA. Four specific areas are covered by the scheme: grassroots football, women's football, elite-level youth football, and coach education.

After the Austrian national association had written a small piece of history by kicking off the scheme at the end of August, Christian Schramm sent us a short 'debrief' which provides a nice taster of what the project is all about.

"The Austrian FA was delighted to welcome the guest associations of Azerbaijan, Hungary and FYR Macedonia for a visit whose central theme was youth football. Willi Ruttensteiner, technical director of the Austrian FA and head of delegation, presented the Austrian approach to talent development to the three associations – and to Istvan Kistelegi, the president of the Hungarian FA, who was invited to the event as 'guest of honour'.

The Austrian FA chose the city of Linz, with its football academy and the regional talent development training centre, as the hub of the four-day visit. One day was spent at the Red Bull club in Salzburg, focusing on its football academy and the club's amateur team.

The first day consisted of a general overview of Austrian youth development methods and the Challenge 08 project, presented by Willi Ruttensteiner.

On day two, the group of 21 travellers heard about general development in Austria from Bernhard Straif, before focusing on the work within the regional talent development centres, which Straif also presented. After a practical session involving 10-14-year-old boys, the delegations dealt with the topic of football academies in the afternoon. The sports director of the football academies, Andreas Heraf, presented the Austrian model for elite youth development, together with Willi Schuldes, head of the academy in Linz. After that, a practical session with academy players brought the day to a close.

The third day was the one spent in Salzburg. The head of the Red Bull football academy and former Austrian Bundesliga coach, Lars Söndergaard, gave an overview of the academy. The head coach of the amateur team, which plays in Austria's second league, Adi Huetter, reported on the work with amateur teams and the transfer of youth players into professional football.



ÖFB

A briefing in Austria.

**ACTION FROM THE  
FINAL OF THE 2005 EUROPEAN  
WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP  
BETWEEN GERMANY  
AND NORWAY.**



At the final meeting and discussion on the last day, all associations expressed positive feedback – to UEFA for setting up the Study Group Scheme and to the Austrian FA for the organisation of the visit. Willi Ruttensteiner emerged with a very favourable impression from the event and the conviction that such valuable communication and exchanges of information between Europe's football associations can only lift the quality of football throughout the continent."

As Christian points out, the emphasis during the visits is very much on practical experience which, apart from promoting the exchange of knowledge, represents further education for the front-line coaches who are active at the various levels within the game. Like the Austrians, the Scots expressed highly positive reactions after acting as hosts and taking their visitors for practical sessions at Celtic FC, Rangers FC and Falkirk FC. "I have to say that this Study Group Scheme has been very warmly welcomed and valued by the participants," Campbell Ogilvie, a member of UEFA's Development and Technical Assistance Committee, commented afterwards. "The key element was knowledge sharing – and this can only be positive in terms of helping to upgrade standards throughout Europe."

The scheme is being coordinated by UEFA's technical director and his team, whose fitness levels have improved radically – since August they've been run off their feet! No fewer than 24 visits had been completed before the end of 2008 and, when the first season closes at the end of June, 52 visits will have taken place with 23 different national associations having played the role of hosts to 152 visiting teams. The figures add up to a fantastic start to a project which has been enthusiastically welcomed.

# ODD YEAR = BUSY YEAR

**ONE OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL'S MYTHS IS THAT ODD-NUMBERED YEARS ARE QUIET ONES. A QUICK GLANCE AT THE FIXTURE LIST FOR 2009 IS ENOUGH TO GIVE THE LIE TO THAT THEORY. THE EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP HAS NOW TAKEN ROOT IN THE ODD YEARS INSTEAD OF BEING PLAYED UNDER THE SHADOW OF EUROS OR WORLD CUPS AND, TOWARDS THE END OF WHAT PROMISES TO BE A HECTIC SUMMER, THE FIRST 12-TEAM FINALS OF THE UEFA WOMEN'S EURO WILL BE STAGED IN FINLAND.**

In the 2005 finals, Germany met – and beat – Norway in the final after having previously crossed paths in Group B. History will repeat itself as Group B once again features Germans, Norwegians and the French team, with Iceland completing the foursome. Curiously, the eight 2005 finalists have qualified once more, with the Netherlands, Ukraine and Russia joining Iceland in the quartet of newcomers.

As usual, the final rounds of the European Under-17 and Under-19 Championships will be played in May and July, with the Ukrainian national association acting as host for the latter and the German FA already giving great media and public projection of the event, which will be spread around a dozen venues in the eastern part of the country – three of them used for the Women's Under-19 finals in 2003. One of the many innovations is the percentage of 11.00 kick-offs – including, in all probability, the final – which will aim to make matches more accessible to a younger audience.

The events in Germany and the Ukraine sandwich the Under-21 finals in Sweden. But there's much more to 2009

than the final tournaments. Stuart Pearce, the former English international who's now coaching the country's Under-21 team which has remained unbeaten in 28 games played since 2005, comments, "nothing is as tough as qualifying for the 2009 European



Stuart Pearce, coach of the England Under-21 side, at work during the play-off match against Wales.



**PIERLUIGI CASIRAGHI,  
COACH OF THE ITALIAN  
UNDER-21 TEAM.**

Under-21 Championship finals. It is the hardest qualification campaign of anything in football I can think of. The top teams go through when you are qualifying for a World Cup or a European Championship. But people don't realise how tough this competition is. Spain won every qualifying game yet had to go into a play-off. We won seven out of eight and were unbeaten and still had to go through a tough play-off against the Welsh. It is difficult. There will be eight good teams in Sweden because the qualification and play-off situation means that it's really tough to actually get there."

Ask the Dutch. Foppe de Haan's team achieved a double in the 2006 and 2007 finals yet have failed to qualify for the event in Sweden after equalling the Swiss in their qualifying group but missing out on the head-to-head result. The Swiss were then qualified until the 95th minute of the second leg of their play-off against Spain, only for Juan Ramón López Caro's side to equalise and then seal the aggregate win with an additional goal during extra time.

That paragraph illustrates the narrowness of margins which separate success and 'failure' in the qualifying phases of UEFA's age-limit competitions where, as Stuart Pearce points out, high-quality fields have to be stripped down to eight

finalists instead of the much higher percentage of successful candidates for the senior finals. Coaches are acutely aware that untimely problems with injuries or the release of players can have a decisive effect in such a highly competitive qualification process.

"Much depends on which players you have at your disposal and the physical condition they are in after a long season," says Pierluigi Casiraghi, set for a 'double' after leading Italy into the 2007 Under-21 finals. "It's a competition which grows from year to year and is becoming more interesting. Qualifying was a great achievement for our youngsters. Winning, though, is never easy." Italy have been drawn with the Swedish hosts, Serbia and Belarus, "a strange group with fewer famous names than in the other one, but that doesn't necessarily mean it's easier. We would have loved to be in the other group, the apparently more difficult one as, for us, it would have been better to play teams like Germany, Spain or England."

Pierluigi Casiraghi believes that the Under-21 and other age-limit tournaments provide valuable experience for players who "face tough competition at their clubs". He maintains "the Under-21 team could become an important spot for them, being an open door

to Europe and to the world. So this could actually give them great motivation at the European Championship." "We know our opponents' potential because we saw in the qualifying phase how tough they will be to beat," says Spain's Juan Ramón López Caro. "We start with uncertainties about player availability, as the finals coincide with the Confederations Cup. Decisions will have to be taken and we hope to count on the strongest possible squad." Spain's group opponents in Sweden will be Finland, Germany and England, whose head coach, Stuart Pearce, reckons "this tournament will be even stronger than two years ago. I've looked at the eight teams, there's not one who can say they haven't got a difficult draw. It's exciting for the players and one thing that's for sure is whoever lifts the trophy will have had to work for it. We'll do as much homework as we can, and will be very thorough in our preparations."

For Finland's coach, Markku Kanerva: "I see it as a big challenge and a chance for our players to get to the next step and compete individually with these top-class players. We want to keep on dreaming and hope we can surprise one of these tough teams."

The sentiments will probably be shared by the technicians who will lead teams into the elite rounds of the Under-17 and Under-19 competitions and, in the women's game, the four-team mini-tournaments which will decide the finalists at the same age levels – four at the Women's Under-17 finals to be played in Nyon and eight Under-19 teams who will travel to Belarus for the final tournament in July. No fewer than 96 teams will be in action during the four qualifying phases to be played between March and June and, in terms of player development, their increasingly competitive nature can only be beneficial, despite the inevitable disappointments suffered by those who narrowly miss out on the special feel and experience of a final tournament.



**Representatives of the eight European Under-21 Championship finalists at the draw in Gothenburg.**

**THE OLYMPIC STADIUM  
IN ROME WILL HOST THE 2009 UEFA  
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL.**

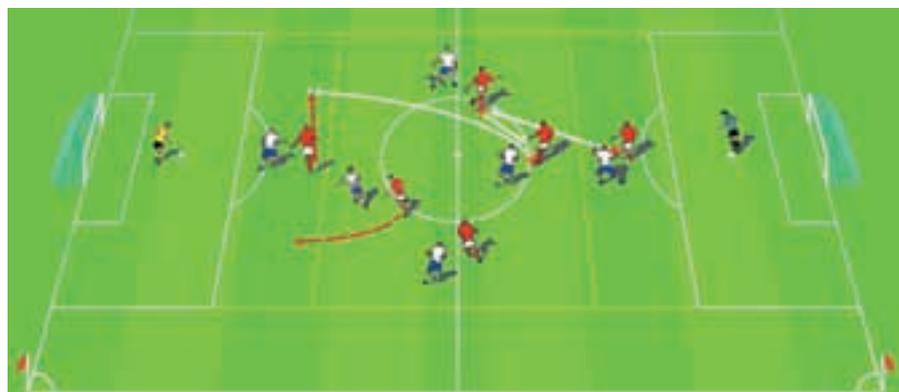


Empics Sport/PA Photos



## TRAINING ROUTINE

**BY ARISTOTELIS BATAKIS**  
Head of Coach Education, Greece



## ATTACKING THROUGH THE CENTRAL CHANNELS

### Aim:

- Developing attacks through the central area
- Using the diamond formation
- Finishing – 1v1 or 2v2

### Numbers:

- 6v6 (plus goalkeepers)

### Area:

- A central zone 40x35m (midfielders play 4v4)
- 2 zones (40x35) attacking areas (strikers and defenders play 1v1 or 2v2 with midfield support)

### Rules:

- Game starts from goalkeeper (defender passes to midfielders)
- Midfielders can play combinations in the central area (e.g. overlapping,

setting up passes or wall passes) to develop the attack

- Strikers receive the pass in the front third and have the following options:
  1. Shoot directly
  2. Play 1v1
  3. Play double pass with supporting midfielder (defensive midfielder can follow the runner into the attacking area)

### Coaching aims:

- Work on creative combinations, using all options in the central area to develop the attack
- Coach midfielders to keep depth and width in diamond formation before initiating penetrating play
- Develop fast, efficient finishing

## AGENDA

**2009**

### February 16 – 20

- Youth & Amateur Committee
- Football Committee

### March 16 – 20

- UEFA Grassroots Workshop (Hamburg)

### April 20

- Medical Committee (Nyon)

### April 24

- Development and Technical Assistance Committee (Nyon)

### May 6 – 18

- 8th European Under-17 Championship – Final Tournament (Germany)

### May 16

- UEFA Women's Cup Final (first leg)

### May 20

- UEFA Cup Final (Istanbul)

### May 23

- UEFA Women's Cup Final (2nd leg)

### May 27

- UEFA Champions League Final (Rome)

### June 15 – 29

- European Under -21 Championship – Final Tournament (Sweden)

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