

# THE TECHNICIAN

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Money–Money–  
Money**

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**Reflections on  
Tournaments –  
Quo Vadis?**

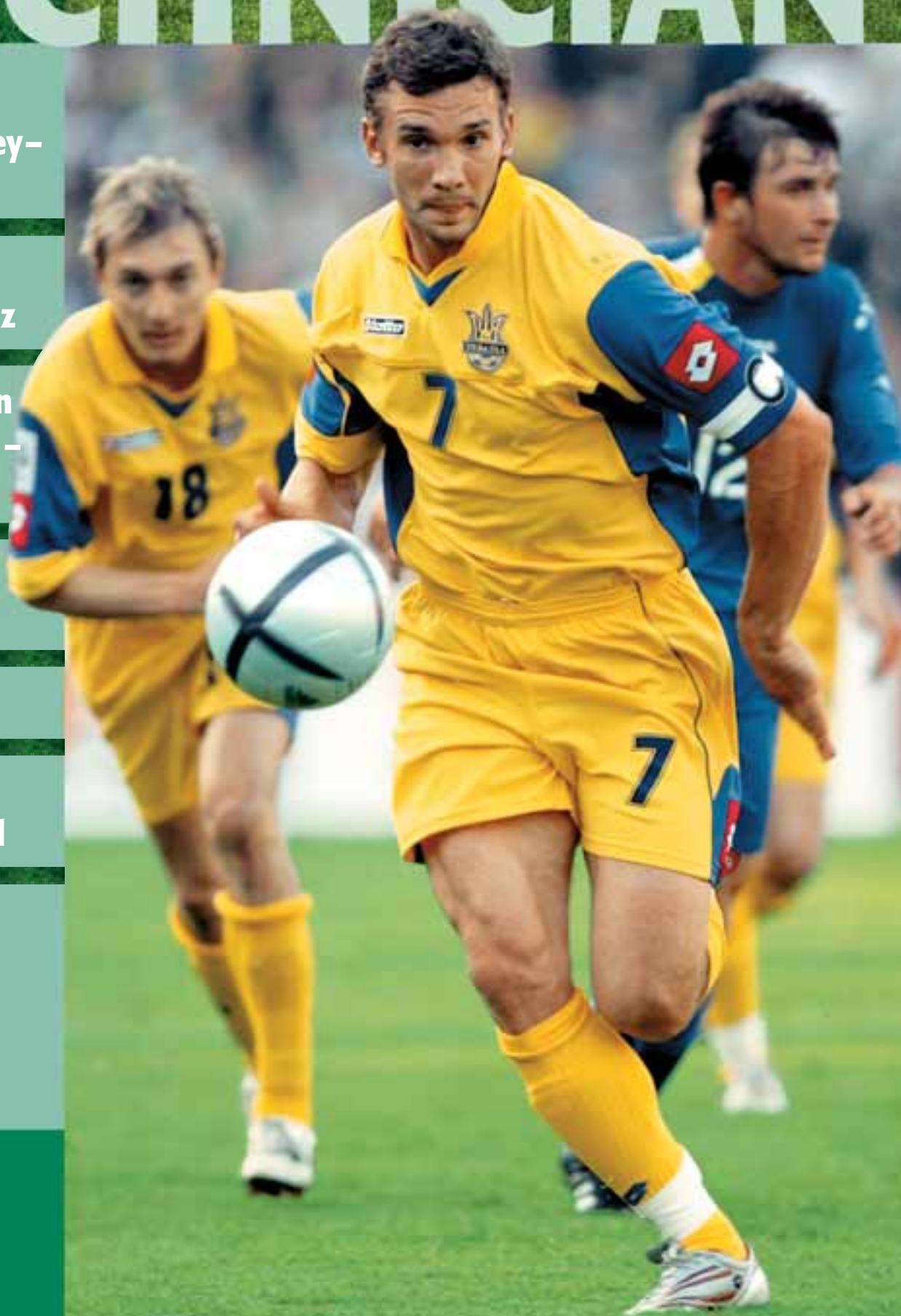
**Feeling  
for the Game**

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**Crossing  
the Threshold**



**NEWSLETTER  
FOR  
COACHES**  
No. 30  
OCTOBER 2005





**COVER**

● Led by their striker Andriy Shevchenko, Ukraine are the first European team to qualify for the 2006 World Cup finals.

(PHOTO: AFP/SUPINSKY)

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**Arsène Wenger and his fellow elite coaches prefer static advertising boards, which are compulsory in the UEFA Champions League.**

EMPICS

# Money – Money – Money

## EDITORIAL

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,  
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Over the last decade, top-level football's popularity has continued to increase, and, consequently, TV and business see the game as a valuable product. Even at UEFA, we refer to those in charge of the competitions as product managers. This marriage between the commercial world and football has its advantages, including more investment in facilities, player development and promotion. In addition, some players have become extremely rich in the post-Bosman era. But we have also witnessed a downside because the vast amounts of money generated by the game have had an enormous effect on coaches, players and clubs.

Millionaire players and their agents have made the job of the coach more demanding than it was in the past. In the old days, when a player had a problem with the coach, he went home and told his father, and that was that. Today, he tells his agent and suddenly there are newspaper headlines and the possibility of a transfer request. Some rich young players have become obsessed with money, and their favourite question is: Why? Why am I doing this? Why am I on the bench? Etc., etc. Player power, fuelled by excessive riches, has become an important factor in football management and has forced a less dictatorial style of leadership. Coaches who handle millionaire players need to be great communicators, with detailed knowledge of all aspects of their job. They must retain full control, yet have the ability to keep the superstars happy and focused. Gérard Houllier, the head coach of Olympique Lyonnais, in recognising the affluence of modern players, speaks on behalf of all elite coaches

when he says: "Top players have all the money they need. What they can't buy is success."

The business-oriented football world, which includes PLCs and super-rich owners, has also had an effect on the security and role of the coach. Results have always been important, but today there is no patience, no understanding of the team-building process, and a bad start can mean a premature end for the new coach. Also, in some countries, the owner buys the players and then gives the coach the job of gelling a group of affluent stars. Many clubs, when signing a player, are motivated by his commercial image, his ability to sell the club's brand and its merchandise.

As the rich get richer, so other clubs struggle to survive. In some countries they go out of business or lose their place in the top league because they try to keep up with the wealthy, overstretch themselves, and go into debt. Even youth development is affected by an uncompromising business mentality. If the academies don't produce first-team players quickly, their funding is reduced or threatened. Time is money and therefore at a premium. And with so many foreign players being bought by clubs to provide a quick fix, the chances of home-grown talents making the top side has been reduced, and this has added to the pressure on youth coaches.

The continuous encroachment of sponsors and television around the football environment has created some concerns. For instance, has the introduction of moving track-advertisement boards created a sporting problem? UEFA's Elite Club Coaches Forum members and the top UEFA referees think it has. Dynamic moving images at the side of the pitch cause confusion, not least for the assistant referee who is trying to read an offside situation. UEFA's policy of static advertising boards at UEFA Champions League matches is welcomed by the coaches and the

referees. And spare a thought for the coach who is prevailed upon to give a flash interview at half-time, particularly if his team is losing and he is trying to focus on the task at hand.

The writer Oscar Wilde once said: "Some people know the price of everything and the value of nothing." Football's sporting value is what makes it interesting and it is important that we keep a balance between the inherent qualities of the game and the need for commercialisation. As a result of football's popularity, vast sums of money have been invested and this has to be welcomed. But we must be careful not to damage the game, and therefore it is important to minimise the negative effects of certain money-induced problems. Today, football is spoken about as a product to be packaged and traded. But the priority must be to retain the game's integrity, its competitiveness, and its spectacle as a sport – otherwise it will be a product nobody wants.



Gérard Houllier: "You can't buy success."

## INTERVIEW

BY ANDY ROXBURGH,  
UEFA TECHNICAL DIRECTOR



**RAFAEL BENÍTEZ WAS BORN IN SPAIN, ONE MONTH BEFORE THE CHAMPION CLUBS' CUP FINAL OF 1960, WHEN REAL MADRID CF BEAT EINTRACHT FRANKFURT 7-3 TO WIN THEIR FIFTH CONSECUTIVE EUROPEAN TITLE. YEARS LATER, RAFA PLAYED FOR REAL'S YOUTH TEAM BEFORE BECOMING A COACH AT THE CLUB AS A DEVELOPER OF YOUNG TALENTS. FROM 1993 TO 1995 HE MANAGED THE REAL MADRID B TEAM, AND THEN WENT 'SOLO' AT REAL VALLADOLID CF, ALTHOUGH THIS DID NOT LAST LONG. AFTER A SHORT STAY AT CA OSASUNA, HE GAINED PROMOTION FROM THE SECOND DIVISION WITH CF EXTREMADURA AND WENT ON TO COACH SUCCESSFULLY AT CD TENERIFE BEFORE SETTLING AT VALENCIA CF, THE CLUB WHERE HE BECAME INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED BY WINNING THE SPANISH LEAGUE AND THE UEFA CUP. IN 2004, RAFA MOVED TO LIVERPOOL AND IN HIS FIRST SEASON CAPTURED THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE TO BECOME ONE OF THE FEW COACHES TO WIN THE UEFA CUP AND UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WITH DIFFERENT CLUBS. (JOSÉ MOURINHO, OF COURSE, WON BOTH CUPS WITH THE SAME CLUB, FC PORTO – UEFA CUP IN 2003 AND UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE IN 2004.) AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS SEASON, RAFA WON THE UEFA SUPER CUP TO ADD ANOTHER TROPHY TO HIS CV. TODAY THE LIVERPOOL BOSS IS THE UNDISPUTED CHAMPION OF EUROPE AND AN OUTSTANDING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SPANISH SCHOOL OF COACHING – HE IS....**

# RAFA BENITEZ

### 1 • What were the key steps which you took to become a top-level coach?

Even as a teenager I was interested in football teams and I took notes and made assessments. Later, I studied physical education and over a three-year period went through the three levels of the Spanish FA coaching programme. For ten years I trained the youth teams and the reserves at Real Madrid although I was not on the full-time staff. As the assistant of the second team, I found myself training two different teams, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and working every day as a coach, writing reports or watching matches. After three months of this I decided it was time to be a professional coach and the president offered me a contract. When you are at Real

Madrid you are protected from many pressures, but when you go to another club as the coach you are on your own, and you find yourself dealing with many other problems like business, money, agents, etc. My first two experiences as a head coach, at Real Valladolid CF and CA Osasuna, did not work out and I was sacked by both clubs. I changed my agent and continued to develop my football knowledge by visiting Italy, Brazil and England. I watched Arrigo Sacchi and Fabio Capello at work and spoke to many managers about their methods. Then I returned to the front line with CF Extremadura, had success there in the second division, and went on to become head coach at CD Tenerife and then, in 2001, joined Valencia CF.

### 2 • Who were the biggest influences on your coaching career?

The best team that I saw when I was developing as a young coach was Sacchi's great side at Milan. But it is impossible to repeat what others have done – you can be influenced, but you must try to do something yourself. Yes, Arrigo Sacchi, the coach, was a big influence.

### 3 • What have been the main differences between coaching in Spain and in England?

Language is of course the first difference and that is difficult to deal with. In Spain, you have more pressure from the board, and the journalists are different because they are constantly present, constantly reporting

**RAFAEL BENITEZ  
AND ANDY ROXBURGH  
WELCOME THE  
CREATION OF THE UEFA  
COACHES CIRCLE.**



every detail. In England, media attention is concentrated around the games.

**4 • How would you describe your coaching philosophy?**

When I think of myself as a coach, the first thing I would say is that I am a worker. I have a very good staff and every day we ask: Why this? Why that? We are always questioning, always looking for new solutions, new ways to proceed. We pay attention to all the details. Regarding football philosophy, in Spain there are two considerations: Firstly, the short passing game or the long passing style? Secondly, to win or to perform well? I think you can play both styles of play, short and long. And our approach is to play well and win. It is important to have control over the situations in the game. If a team plays deep against you, you may need to circulate the ball; when you are being pressurised, sometimes the long ball is the answer. To know what to do in each situation is the key. I am very pragmatic in my coaching work.

**5 • What do you emphasise in training?**

The first priority is to improve defensive tactical play because this is less complicated than the attacking side and is important for success. The most important thing for me is to be organised. I work a lot on patterns of play and, of course, as the statistics prove, counter-attacks and set-plays are very important. When we talk about set-plays, I agree with Sir Alex (Ferguson) that delivery is everything.

**6 • Do you do the coaching yourself or do you delegate it to other members of the staff?**

This is another difference between Spain and England when we talk about coaching. In Spain, you must do your job on the pitch, coaching the players in tactical work or working with your physical trainer and other members of staff. You must be there every day on the field. In England, you can



**AFTER THE UEFA CUP AND THE UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE, RAFAEL BENITEZ EARNS ANOTHER UEFA MEDAL (BEING PRESENTED BY THE UEFA PRESIDENT), THIS TIME FOR WINNING THE UEFA SUPER CUP.**

give responsibility to your people because you may have to deal with agents, the board or a player. You need to have confidence in your staff to carry out the general work, but I am always there to deal with the tactical training. Some members of my staff have been with me for eight or nine years and they know my philosophy and the way I work. But I also have an assistant, Alex Miller, who was at Liverpool before me and he knows the mentality of the players and the philosophy of the club.

**7 • What were the important features of your Valencia team which won the UEFA Cup?**

It was a team that worked very hard and had been together for three years. We were therefore able to talk about where, how and when to do the press-

ing. They knew what to do and we could change tactics quickly. We used a lot of players by rotating the squad and this proved successful because we won the league and the UEFA Cup. This was a team which understood our style and what we were trying to do.

**8 • Has the history of Liverpool FC influenced the type of football you have developed at Anfield?**

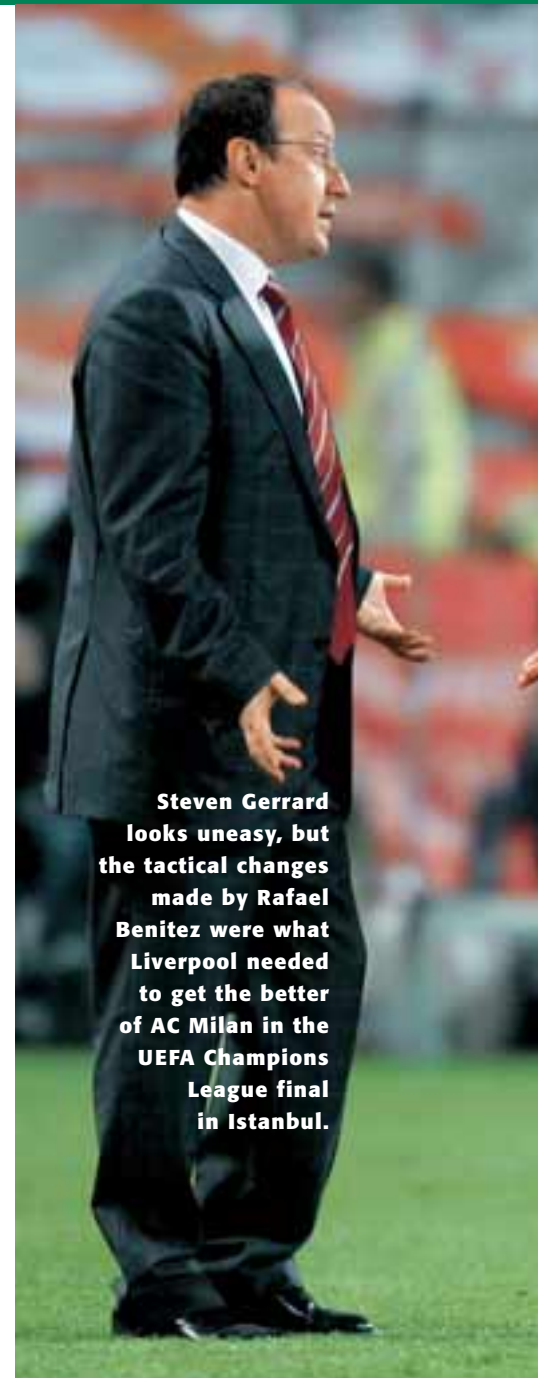
For sure. The former Liverpool sides played pass-and-move and we try to do the same, but as I said to you, we also have to be able to adapt to circumstances. For me, the pass-and-run approach is the best. I read a lot about the club's history and at the moment I have a book about Bill Shankly, who built the foundations of the current club.

**9 • Your predecessor as Liverpool head coach, Gérard Houllier, met you shortly after you took over at Anfield to offer his support. How valuable was that?**

For me, it was another country, another team, and I appreciated Gérard's help – he gave me a lot of information. The advice I got from many people at Anfield, like Gérard, Phil Thompson and others, was invaluable.

**10 • What were the decisive moments on your way to the final in Istanbul?**

The most important game was against Olympiacos at home. We had spoken about being cautious because if they scored we would need three goals. Just before half-time they did score and, as we would say in Spanish, it was like having water poured on your hopes. Stevie Gerrard scored a fantastic goal before the end to give us a great 3-1 victory. But I have to add that the home tie with Chelsea was also very significant because of the rivalry.



**Steven Gerrard looks uneasy, but the tactical changes made by Rafael Benítez were what Liverpool needed to get the better of AC Milan in the UEFA Champions League final in Istanbul.**

**11 • Your tactical changes at half-time against AC Milan transformed the final. What was the thinking behind your decisions?**

I was thinking about what to say and how to say it as I walked into the dressing room at half-time in Istanbul. People don't know how difficult it can be at such a moment, especially if you don't know the right words to use. Before half-time we were losing 2-0 and I was writing some words when



Djibril Cissé in training with Rafa.

## THE ULTIMATE TROPHY FOR STEVEN GERRARD AND RAFAEL BENITEZ.



DE SOUZA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

suddenly we lost a third goal. As I walked down the tunnel to the dressing room at the end of the first half, I was considering what to say. I said to the players that our supporters were still behind us and that if we scored one goal the situation could change. I then made tactical changes and went three at the back with Dietmar Hamann as part of a two-man screen in the midfield. But significantly, with Stevie Finnan injured and out of the second

half, we had no right-back on the field. After we went to 3-3 and Milan brought on Serginho on the left, I had to move Stevie Gerrard from his attacking role behind the strikers to right back – Stevie was the only appropriate player available to play the role. This was our captain's third position in the game. At the end we controlled the game, controlled the spaces, and Stevie did a great job, ultimately leading the team to victory.

### 12 • Since you started coaching, how has the game evolved tactically?

The game has become faster and more technical, that is true. I remember when we started and we used a sweeper. Now nearly everybody operates with a flat four-man zone. The formations have also evolved and today most operate with only one striker. It has become more important to get players into the penalty box rather than have players already in there. This is the major difference we have seen in the development of the game.

### 13 • What annoys you most/pleases you most about football today?

Difficult question. However, I must say that I love the crowds, the atmosphere, in England. The supporters are wonderful. The respect you receive just for doing what you love doing – taking training and doing your job. I get enormous confidence from the support I receive; it is fantastic.

A problem in football today is the money – it has become big business. There are a lot of people around the players and the coaches who are thinking only about money and business. Sometimes players don't play so well because they are thinking about other things.

### 14 • 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.



Rafael Benitez and José Mourinho issue their instructions during the return leg of the UEFA Champions League semi-final between Liverpool and Chelsea.



**ROY MILLAR (LEFT)  
AND GERHARD HITZEL, TECHNICAL  
OBSERVERS AT THE UNDER-19  
CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL ROUND  
IN NORTHERN IRELAND.**

# QUO VADIS?

**EVERY CALENDAR YEAR CONTAINS A CHAIN OF TOURNAMENTS WHICH, ALL TOO OFTEN, ARE CONSIDERED AS ISOLATED EVENTS. EACH, OF COURSE, HAS INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS. BUT ALL REPRESENT LINKS IN A LONG CHAIN OF PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AND ALL OFFER DIFFERENT CHALLENGES TO THE TECHNICIAN AND THE EDUCATOR. SOME REFLECTIONS BASED ON RECENT TOURNAMENTS RAISE SOME INTERESTING PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROUTE FROM THE GRASSROOTS TOWARDS THE TOP.**

## The Welcome Mat

When you're at the peak of the pyramid, it's easier to contemplate far horizons. These days, elite coaches take international football for granted and, as Arsène Wenger says, "the Champions League is probably the ultimate challenge for a coach." But, the lower you go down the pyramid, the more difficult it becomes to gain international perspectives. Budgets, for instance, probably don't offer that much scope when it comes to dispatching coaches to other countries in search of broader horizons or enriching contact with fellow technicians. But, if you can't go to them, one alternative is to invite them to visit you.

That, of course, is easier said than done. But the tournaments staged during the spring and summer of 2005 underlined the potential long-term benefits of playing host to international visitors. We've already mentioned how facilities were dramatically upgraded in several Tuscan towns around Pisa when the European Under-17 Championship was played there in May. And it was a similar story when the Under-19s landed in Northern Ireland a couple of months later.

As chairman of UEFA's Youth & Amateur Football Committee, Jim Boyce was well aware of the implications when the national association he presides over put in

a bid to host the event. "You have to be realistic," he comments, "and get your funding in place first. In this respect the government was magnificent, investing around £600,000 in upgrading facilities at all the venues. We're not just talking about pitches, but also other elements like dressing rooms, hospitality areas and so on. In other words, the tournament has left a permanent legacy and that's why we're hoping to stage the Under-21 finals in a not-too-distant future."

One man who would be delighted is Northern Ireland's Technical Director, Roy Millar. And he's by no means alone. With 91 international caps stacked in his wardrobe, Mal Donaghy might be excused for feeling he's seen just about everything. But he enthuses about the educational benefits he, his coaching staff and his players derived from the competition. "It wasn't just valuable for Mal and his coach Seamus Heath," Roy Millar explains. "The whole coaching team gained valuable experience from being part of an international tournament. Their experiences will be passed right through the Northern Irish game via local players and clubs. By the way, when we talk about the venues, we mustn't forget that the training venues were also upgraded, along with extra equipment, such as portable goals and so on. This makes it perfectly reasonable to say that the event was of long-term value for players and coaches – and for the development of players in the future."



French U19 players celebrate their European success.



**RUSSIA'S  
WOMEN'S U19 CHAMPION  
ELENA DANILOVA  
AND HER COACH  
VALENTIN GRISHIN.**

That was also the end of the road for the rest of the European contingent – but the manner of defeat makes talk of ‘negative trends’ a risky subject. Germany took Brazil to extra time before succumbing 2-1; Paolo Berrettini’s Italian side was beaten 4-2 in a penalty shoot-out after a 2-2 draw with Morocco; and Foppe de Haan’s Dutch hosts lost a marathon penalty shoot-out 10-9 after a 1-1 draw with Nigeria.

Does the evidence point to shortcomings in comparison with South Americans and Africans? If so, what are they? Do we need to reflect deeply on our development programmes? Do we even start complaining – squad lists in hand – that our clubs are now schooling the foreign youngsters who, on the international stage, turn into our executioners? Or do we ask ourselves the perennial questions about the importance of ‘success’ in age-limit competitions?

Similar views were being expressed in Hungary, where the Women’s Under-19 Championship was being played in parallel. The hosts went into the tournament well aware of their limitations on the field of play but, like the Northern Irish, determined to use the event as a boost to development. György Mezey, Technical Director and Coach Education Director of the Hungarian national association, formed part of UEFA’s Technical Study Group at the tournament. Apart from echoing all the sentiments expressed by Roy Millar, he observed how the other participants took good note of the *modus operandi* of the Germans, who have been setting the benchmarks in women’s football. For the hosts, the learning curves at youth tournaments are encouragingly steep.

**The Trophy Cabinet**

This year’s Under-17 and Women’s Under-19 Championships defined Europe’s representatives on the world stage in coming months. What are their chances of success? And how important is it to be successful at these levels?

There were some interesting ripples in the wake of the FIFA World Under-20 Championship staged in the Netherlands in June. European teams, despite a creditable record in previous tournaments, were conspicuous by their absence from the medal ceremonies. There was talk of ‘failure’.

The public prosecutors could, admittedly, present some damning evidence. The Swiss went home after the group phase; Italy reached the last 16 despite losing to Colombia and Syria; the Ukrainians were beaten by Nigeria in the last 16; and so were the Turks – though their defeat was at the hands of their European stablemates from Spain who, after an impressive start, were defeated 3-1 by Argentina in the quarter-finals.



Netherlands v Nigeria in the World Youth Championship.



**STATIC BOARDS RATHER THAN  
ELECTRONIC MOVING-TRACK ADS.**

# FEELING FOR THE GAME

**THE ELITE COACHES FIELD A STRONG SQUAD OF 16 FOR THE SEVENTH ANNUAL FORUM AT UEFA'S HEADQUARTERS IN SEPTEMBER. AS USUAL, TIME WAS DEVOTED TO NUTS-AND-BOLTS TOPICS, BUT THIS YEAR THERE WAS A CLEAR EMPHASIS ON FOOTBALLING RATHER THAN ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES.**

The nuts-and-bolts discussions focused on hardy perennials like the number of substitutes allowed to sit on the bench – and in this department the coaches felt that the time has come to adopt pan-European norms. At present, they observed, the population of the bench varies considerably from one domestic league to another. At the peak of the pyramid, sending squad members to sit in the stand is still anathema to most coaches, and it was pointed out that,

in many cases, local youngsters are being deprived of the chance to play a role in the proceedings.

As mentioned on earlier pages, electronic moving-track advertising boards were as roundly condemned by the coaches as they had been by the referees a couple of days earlier. Nobody disputes the need to find a nice balance between the game and its commercial connotations, but the introduction of electronic moving

boards is regarded by the coaches as a deliberate attempt to divert attention away from the game and, in doing so, risks disturbing the judgement of match officials – especially an assistant referee who is trying to read the offside line.

However, the lion's share of the forum was dedicated to footballing trends and, in particular, to management principles, including the degree of protection that should be offered to the star performers, and the need to establish workable relationships with the media.

Some of them are inextricably intertwined. For instance, the technician has to try to adjust his behaviour and suppress feelings when facing a TV camera moments after the final whistle. Discussions about the reliability of 'gut feelings' revealed that most coaches are prepared to go along with their feelings, but often after sharing them with other members of their coaching team.

Emotional states are easily linked with levels of stress – and it was significant that a common denomi-



How many substitutes should be allowed to sit on the bench at Champions League matches?

**SEATED, LEFT TO RIGHT: PAUL LE GUEN, VANDERLEI LUXEMBURGO, RAFAEL BENITEZ, ROBERTO MANCINI, LARS-CHRISTER OLSSON, SIR ALEX FERGUSON, FABIO CAPELLO, GÉRARD HOULLIER, ARSÈNE WENGER. STANDING: VALERY GAZZAEV, JAVIER IRURETA, FELIX MAGATH, MANUEL PELLEGRINI, ALBERTO MALESANI, JOSÉ MOURINHO, CO ADRIAANSE, HOLGER OSIEK, ALEX MCLEISH, ANDY ROXBURGH.**



Vanderlei Luxemburgo: every elite coach has to face pressure from the media.

nator among the elite squad was the ability to channel stress into positive forces – to such an extent that Arsène Wenger remarked “I don’t feel comfortable when I have no stress.”

On the other hand, some admitted to suffering stress symptoms while dealing with the media and, as UEFA’s senior media officer, Frits Ahlstrøm, underlined, this is where the qualities

of the club’s press officer are absolutely crucial in establishing good routes of communication with the supporters via the media.

Another of the interesting questions raised was how far the technician should be willing and able to influence the behavioural patterns of his players. How far should players be urged to suppress their feelings? How far can a ‘rough diamond’ be polished without it losing its cutting edge?

In other words, the seventh Elite Club Coaches Forum generated enough material for a book – or at least for some interesting sessions at conferences in the future.

**SIR ALEX FERGUSON  
(WITH HIS PLAYER RUUD VAN NISTELROOY)  
HAS AGREED TO ACT  
AS THE FIRST HONORARY LEADER  
OF THE UEFA COACHES CIRCLE.**

# A FULL CIRCLE

**THE UEFA COACHES CIRCLE IS NOW IN MOTION,  
WITH SIR ALEX FERGUSON ACTING AS HONORARY  
LEADER AS THE PROJECT GATHERS MOMENTUM.**

You may have already seen a copy of the first bulletin, where the basic objectives are set out. But it's probably worth spending a couple of lines to explain that the circle is formed by the coaches and coach educators who attend UEFA events. Indeed, the sheer range of UEFA courses/conferences provided one of the prime reasons for inventing the circle. Membership is only available to those coaches who have been invited to a UEFA event.

Many coaches who read *The Technician* have attended a conference, course,

forum, symposium or a workshop.

The scope is enormous – ranging from the grassroots to the National Coaches Conference and the Elite Club Coaches Forum, where top-level national-team and club competitions are discussed. It means that Andy Roxburgh and a handful of his team members from UEFA HQ are probably the only ones to attend them all.

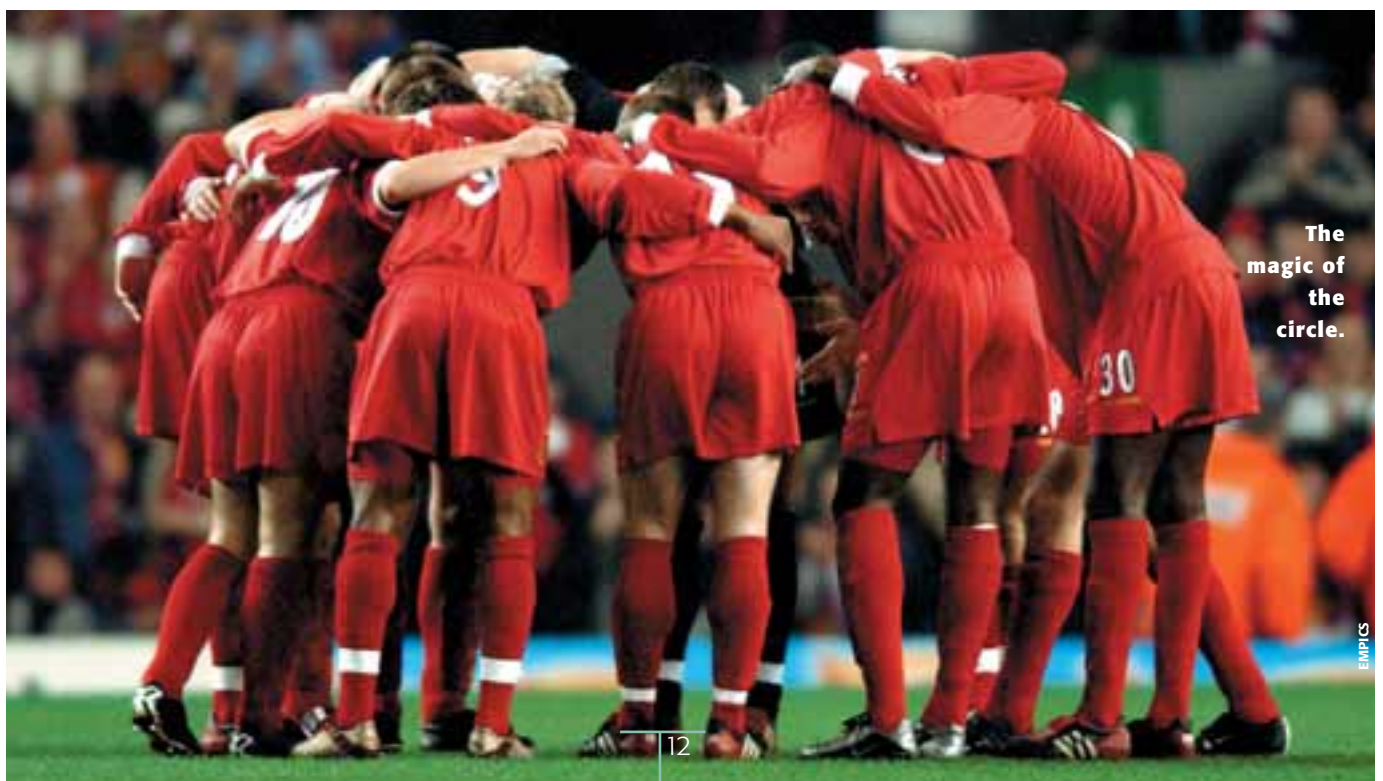
The idea is to help the specialists to cast aside their splendid isolation and, in a sense, to 'eavesdrop' on the events that they don't attend.

As the bulletin explains, members will receive the full range of print and DVD materials, along with access to an exclusive extranet that features information, training routines and a library service.

Coaches who attend UEFA events will be receiving their invitation to join the circle, the instructions for which are self-explanatory. This is a service offered by UEFA with a view to integrating technicians from each and every specialised field into a footballing family – a magic circle, we hope.



EMPICS



**The  
magic of  
the  
circle.**

EMPICS

**JOE VENGLOS (LEFT) VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, LED A REGIONS' CUP ROUNDTABLE IN POLAND WITH JIM BOYCE, CHAIRMAN OF THE YOUTH & AMATEUR FOOTBALL COMMITTEE.**



# CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

**IF UEFA'S AGE-LIMIT COMPETITIONS REPRESENT STEPS UP THE EDUCATIONAL LADDER TOWARDS THE TOP, THE UEFA REGIONS' CUP HAS TO BE REGARDED AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL GAMES – A FACT WHICH WAS EMPHASISED DURING THE FINAL TOURNAMENT RECENTLY PLAYED IN POLAND.**



Regions' Cup winners Vasca with the coveted trophy.

The Czech representatives from Brno fielded a stronger team in the qualifying rounds than in the final tournament because players were recruited by clubs of higher level and success in Poland opened doors for many players to cross the threshold between amateur and professional (or at least semi-professional) football – including the scorer of the only goal in the final which won the title for Vasca and earned him a trial at a Spanish first division club.

But the salient feature of the Regions' Cup is neither status nor money.

A place in the final tournament represents a rare opportunity for players and technicians to savour a European ambience. For most, it was a first chance to spend ten days as a group in a different environment and to enjoy an experience on the international stage. For the technician it offers the challenge of putting together a 'professional' package of training and preparation sessions. For the players, it represents a peak moment in their career or, as one participant in Poland announced "this is like playing in the Champions League". The impression is understandable. Matches are handled

by international referees; UEFA's set-up is in line with the standards of other final tournaments; and games are played under the scrutiny of technical observers and TV cameras.

The result is a fascinating amateur tournament played in a totally professional context... on the pitch. Once the ball has stopped rolling, the teams get together for a chat, a glass of something and a song or three. Some would say that the UEFA Regions' Cup offers the best of both worlds.



Goalkeeper Krasimir Giorev (South-West Region-Sofia) comes to the rescue in the final against Vasca.



**THE FRENCH  
UNDER-19 CAPTAIN,  
YOUNES KABOUL.**



# THE SUMMER WINNERS

**IT HAS BEEN A HEARTENING YEAR FOR THE RUSSIANS,  
WHOSE ON-THE-FIELD SUCCESSES HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE WELCOME  
DURING A PERIOD OF SWEEPING DOMESTIC CHANGES.**

The futsal team took the silver medal at the European Championship in February; PFC CSKA Moskva won the country's first-ever UEFA club competition trophy in May (to earn the right to compete for the UEFA Super Cup in Monaco for the first time); and the women's Under-19 team became champions of Europe in July. Such across-the-board success is a clear indication that some very good work has been done on the training ground and in development projects. France underlined their status and their levels of technique by reaching both Under-19 finals in July though, at senior level in the women's game, German supremacy was reiterated when Tina Theune-Meyer bowed out in style, taking the European title in Blackburn only weeks after the Germans had struck gold at club level. Summers seem to get busier and busier yet, while the elite were searching for European glory, there was still time to enjoy some amateur football of the highest class at the UEFA Regions' Cup finals in Poland, where the Spanish representatives – a team from the Basque region – narrowly beat an excellent side from Bulgaria.

## NATIONAL-TEAM COMPETITIONS

### **European Women's Championship in England**

Germany v Norway 3-1  
Champion: Tina Theune-Meyer  
Runner-up: Bjarne Berntsen

### **European Under-19 Championship in Northern Ireland**

France v England 3-1  
Champion: Jean Gallice  
Runner-up: Martin Hunter

### **European Women's Under-19 Championship in Hungary**

Russia v France 2-2 after extra time;  
6-5 on penalties  
Champion: Valentin Grishin  
Runner-up: Stéphane Pilard

### **UEFA Regions' Cup in Poland**

Vasca (Spain) v South-West Region-  
Sofia (Bulgaria) 1-0  
Champion: José Antonio Goikoetxea  
Runner-up: Ivan Iliev



**Liverpool FC –  
winners of the  
UEFA Super Cup.**

## CLUB COMPETITIONS

### **UEFA Super Cup in Monaco**

Liverpool FC v PFC CSKA Moskva 3-1  
(after extra time)  
Champion: Rafael Benítez (Spain)  
Runner-up: Valery Gazzhev



**THE GERMAN  
TEAM CELEBRATE  
AFTER BEATING  
NORWAY IN THE  
WOMEN'S FINAL.**

## UEFA TECHNICAL REPORTS 2005

Were you aware that the Italian teams were flagged offside almost 200 times during last season's UEFA Champions League? Or that FC Barcelona averaged 63% of ball possession? Or that 90 of the 115 matches that produced goals were won by the team scoring the first goal? Or that only nine goals were scored from direct free-kicks?

These are some of the questions raised by the Technical Report on the 2004/05 UEFA Champions League, which is now available and is being distributed to all national associations. Next off the press will be the technical reports on the 2005 European Women's Championship, the European Under-19 Championship and the Women's Under-19 Championship.

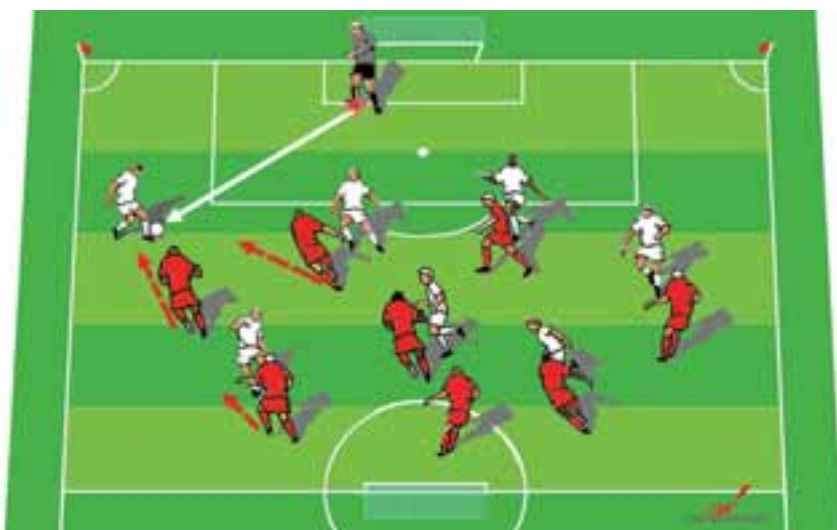
## TRAINING

# MY FAVOURITE PRACTICE

## PRESSING v COUNTERING

**BY VALERY GAZZAEV**

Head Coach CSKA Moskva



### Aim

- To work on pressing and countering

### Numbers

- 2 teams 8 v 8 (1 goalkeeper + 7 when defending and countering)

### Area

- Half pitch

### Duration

- 2 x 7 minutes with a one-minute break (The teams change roles at the break)

### Rules

- The goalkeeper of the defending/countering team must play the ball to

a team-mate – this is a free pass. The goalkeeper cannot score.

- The pressing team has no goalkeeper, but has an extra man in midfield (a joker).

### Coaching

- To teach the pressing team to press the ball, to pressure opponents close to the ball, and to collectively squeeze the space. On regaining possession, they go for goal.
- The defending/countering team need to retain possession under pressure, and when appropriate, to counter immediately the ball is regained.

## AGENDA

**2005**

### October 17-19

UEFA Women's Football Conference (Oslo)

### November 29

UEFA Elite Club Youth Coaches Forum (Cyprus)

### November 29 – December 1

UEFA Youth Football Conference (Cyprus)

### December 9

Final Draw 2006 FIFA World Cup (Leipzig)

### December 11-18

FIFA Club World Championship (Japan)

**2006**

### January 27

Qualifying Draw EURO 2008 (Montreux)

### February 14-16

UEFA Futsal Conference (Madrid)

### The Technician No. 31

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