

5th WORLD SQUASH COACHING CONFERENCE

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“The Coach of the Future – New Thinking”

Peter Spence

Program Manager, Victorian Institute of Sport

Former Australian Institute of Sport Cricket Coach

Our past successes guarantee nothing. We must ensure that our established paradigms do not prevent us from success in the future. In 1960 the Swiss had 65% of the world watch market but they never protected their market and by 1977 they only had 10% of the market because the Japanese had jumped in with the Seiko range.

We should look at other sports and make as much use of technology as possible. There are many advances in science and these need to be explored. Coaches must not remain in their comfort zone. “You can analyse the past but have to design the future “ (Edward de Bono). We must not be locked into our own paradigms.

“In the future there are no roads – no pathways to follow.” In his book “Leading the Revolution” Gary Hamel says that future success requires “.....radical non-linear business concept innovations. “

What will provide the competitive advantage in 2010? Throw away coaching manuals. Be aware of technical guidance but not restricted by it.

Technology should be used to develop every single muscle. We need to know the physical and mental states and what state is needed for success. We need to develop decision making. We need to ascertain the optimum performance state. We need to tap the human potential more fully and combine all factors eg technique, training, nutrition.

Much of our existing thinking is based upon rigid machine like models formulated by Sir Isaac Newton in the 17th century. We are dealing with humans not machines.

Science has progressed to a new level of Quantum thinking. Quantum thinking implies that developments do not occur step by step. It breaks away from cause and effect and accepts the notion of non-local effect.

We need to think in terms of influence, intelligence and energy. We need to open minds and accept the inter-connected nature of things. It is the relationship between the various components not the specific isolated component eg sugar is made up of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen none of which is sweet.

With an athlete it is the combination of everything and then how they act/react. There is a continual exchange of information in the body.

The coach must step back and view themselves and the athletes in their entirety.

One must establish strong visions and sound values- set targets and goals: empower the athlete to achieve them: must set guidelines.

Behaviour must be shaped through concepts and not control.

Watch for trends and flow- not cause and control.

We must realise that instability and chaos is not necessarily bad – they may lead to progress through self-organisation.

In a group situation one often gets infighting. If this is managed correctly one can progress to a higher level. One must recognize talents - assist it and focus. The coach must provide the challenges, the values and facilitate the group.

One must not expect immediate solutions. One must not base plans entirely on the past - each situation is unique. Expect the Quantum leap – break the accepted mind set that assumes success comes one step at a time. Innovate in order to be successful - continue to change.

“Lifeskill Planning System – VIS Gameplan”

Jacqui Louder

Athlete Career and Education Advisor VIS: Sport Psychologist, North Melbourne Australian Football League Club

At the VIS a counsellor is appointed to each athlete to assist with communication skills, career counseling and personal relationships. In soccer 67% of professional players personal relationships come to an end when they retire.

In the VIS Squash Program Model of Player Development the dietician, the counsellor, the psychologist and the coach and the trainer must all work together.

The Trainer’s Primary Responsibilities are:
Perceptual, motor and physical skills.

The Coach’s Primary Responsibilities are:
Psychological, skills, perceptual motor skills, physical skills, life skills and relationship skills.

The Mentor’s Primary responsibilities are:
Life skills, Relationships skills

There are five phases:
FUNdamentals, Training to train, training to compete, Training to win, Retirement
The Trainer is involved with the FUNdamentals stage: The Coach with Training to Train and Training to Compete and the mentor with Training to win.

One need different assessments: coaching, life skills and educational.

A yearly planner is used which covers the priorities of the athlete at each different stage. Career/Education: Social, family: Club commitments and Performance peaking. One allocates in importance from 1-5 throughout the days/weeks/months of the year.

Lifeskills workshops are fitted in where there is the least pressure. These cover media/ goalsetting/support networking/job seeking/and transition to retirement.

There is integration between the individual’s whole life: social/personal/performance priorities: also between the coach’s relationship with the athlete and the athlete’s life skills needs.
The athletes also receive language skills training; information on travel both domestically and internationally as well as information on the food/weather/culture of the country they are visiting.

There must be a TRUE BALANCE between: sport and the allocation of time to it: career/education and which one has the priority at which time.

“THE BUCKET “

GEOFF DAVENPORT

LEVEL 2 SQUASH COACH

COACH, SQUASH AUSTRALIA ELITE COACHING PROGRAM

CURRENT NSW JUNIOR PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

META COACHING

ROGER SMITH

M.ED with a background in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

His programmes include recognition of multiple abilities: learning preferences: communications: metalearning and metateaching states: peer coaching:scaffolds and frameworks for literacy, numeracy and personal development.”

Meta means awareness.

The mind always looks for novelties and pattern. One never know what I in a learner’s head – one can only speculate

Teaching and coaching share similarities and dissimilarities. Coaching is incredibly complex. The method can be visible, audible or physical. If something do not work the first time one has to try another way. Researchers are finding an endless list of variables. Generally boys do not register auditorally (Left side of the brain) but visually (right side of the brain). Females are more verbal.

Coaching encompasses:

Communication skills

Expertise of domain specific knowledge

Domain general knowledge – uniting themes of teaching/coaching and players/learners - discipline, resilience, vision

Learning preferences

Socio-economic status

Self esteem

Perfectionist

Culture – eg eyecontact can be disrespectful

Personality factors

There are various methods of teaching/coaching. In “**bucket-filling**” it is believed that the teacher has wisdom, knowledge and experience and the coach will impart this to the learner – the knowledge goes from the expert to the novice. The focus of power remains with the teacher/coach. It is a telling approach and doe not empower the learner. It stifles creativity. By the age of 16 there is a 80% drop off in creativity. Problem solving is reduced by 60%.

Guided Discovery: the coach’s expertise is less visible. He/she devises situations where the players are led to the goal. There is an awakening stage. The coach I the leader.

Immersion or Dunking Approach: This method uses osmotic teaching . the coach plays a non-directive role. He/she spends time planning. Individuals are seen as part of the group. They develop skills and knowledge.

Facilitative or Collaborative Approach: The coach sees the individual as part of the group and intervenes by socially engineering the group. He/she is highly visible playing the role of facilitator He/he synergises the group.

Any method will depend on the age/maturation etc of the group.
Each method had disadvantages a/advantages. What' wrong: what's right?
How effective I the communicator?
Who solves the problem on/off court?
The player on court only has himself/herself.
How resilient are children in the face of adversity.

Meta coaches rarely criticize their players – they are pursuing perfection.
There is never an end in profiling a player- it is a constant state of discovery.
The meta coach needs to be introspective – be aware of the ways the pupil learns –
verbal/visual/kinaesthetic.

What is intelligence?

Females prefer the verbal form: they are better able to access the left side of the brain:
they are able to carry information for longer: they are more likely to process the
information.

Men use the right side: are not good verbally: they are less likely to access the left brain:
they are more singularly focused.

Right brain thinkers visualize and pattern and are able to set up the big picture while left
brain thinkers accommodate far greater detail and listen and verbalise more easily.

Female players are likely to learn more easily when told things while the male players
learn more easily from demonstrations.

It is important to make use of this knowledge if one wishes to be an effective coach.

“TECHNICAL INNOVATION IN COACHING”

Dr Lex Bertrand

VIS Sailing Coach

Former National and Olympic Coach

De Bertrand has a simple coaching philosophy : No Limits –anything is possible. True High Performance is scary and magical: Quantum environment training produces athletes who can totally master their environment.

He wants the coach to be different. If the mind lets you do it aim for the quantum zone. One needs to remove the comfort zone and do things that are impossible. One needs to set challenges in the High Performance environment.

He towed a 16 year old girl in her laser yacht at high speed with a powerboat. The first time she lost control : she sailed away alone a little better than before: he towed her again at high speed – its not easy because the wash makes the yacht unstable – she improved- thereafter she was able to be towed at high speed- she thoroughly enjoyed it and tried to “surf” the waves.

With his presentation he wanted to:

- * Get the coaches out of their comfort zones
- * Redefine performance
- * Redefine training
- * Shake up “belief” systems

Use different training methods – What is normal ??

He also demonstrated a system where the players were fitted with earphones and a receiver and a monitor was placed in an office. The coach could communicate with the players from the office. Very useful for players who are not in close proximity to the coach.

Few suggestions were forthcoming as to what could be way out for squash.

One suggestions was that a string/rope be hung across the front wall of the court on which hung moving targets. This could be used for accuracy – precision hitting.

“VOLLEYING – DO CURRENT PLAYERS VOLLEY MORE OR LESS THAN IN THE PAST?”

WILLIAM MCNALLY

Mechanical Engineer

USSRA Coaching Chair

Men's and Women's Squash Coach, Connecticut, USA

Author of three publications on squash along with several articles.

Presently completing Canada's Level 4 Coaching Accreditation

Reasons for more volleys:

Rackets are not only lighter but also more powerful

Lighter rackets allow more volleying from different points.

Players are taller and rangier.

The field of conditioned players is much higher.

Play has evolved in a more attacking format.

- Consolidating volley – defending volley to gain or maintain position at center of the court.
- Attacking volley – eg a cross court corner nick.

Coaching Implications:

Teach the attacking volley – aim quantity and quality

Practice faster reaction time – taking the ball earlier

Was not a successful presentation as graphs did not prove that present day players volley more or that the player who plays the most volleys win the match

“MODERN DRILLS/ROUTINES/PATTERNS WITH COACHING PANEL”

Roger Flynn

Grad. Dip. Elite Sports Coaching: VIS Head Coach: Coaching Director, Victorian Squash Federation: Australian Junior Men’s Team Coach 1998-2000: Australian Commonwealth Games Team Coach 2002: Member, Squash Australia High Performance Committee

Skill can be defined as the ability to perform a task consistently.

One performs drills using genetic abilities and they are done to perfect them. 3000/4000 are needed to perfect a repetition while 100000 are needed to learn it.

The Principle of Overload must be used in Training eg if a dumbbell is used 10 times there is an initial overload but then no improvement. One must continually overload to improve performance.

AS Dr Bertrand had shown once areas were challenged then the athlete adapted and the performance levels improved. There must be consistent challenge and then quantum jumps occur.

Coaches are the observer- they must challenge the athlete to perform.

There should be creativity, fun and experimentation.

(1/2 squash ball were used to demarcate the target areas for the drills.)

Target are used for accuracy and consistency – gives immediate feedback to player indicating the skill level and this builds confidence. Give positive feedback and players can be compared.

If a target is moved the players speed up themselves without having been told to.

The target should be small. A straight drive tight on the wall is a good drill. Also give them the perfect bull’s eye (ie the spot where the perfect drive would land – demarcate it with a ½ squash ball – the bull’s eye covers an area of 30cm around that ball)

Be specific in the feedback. Understand the effects of the drill and then define the targets.

Players can be left on their own.

Much use was made of the player playing with two balls at the same time –see notes.

Some Drills :

2 players: A hard drive crosscourt: B volley drops

3 players: A drop/drive : B looks for the volley and volleys straight : C boasts/ retrieves drop then hits another drop.

Then add lob and allow the 3 players the freedom to hit any stroke

The game plan can be predetermined by drills and also the opportunity to choose the right Shot at the right time. The drills need an instantaneous reaction.

When adding the volley pressure is put on the decision making.

Drive/Boast : A plays boast in the front: B plays straight drive behind : C crosscourts drive from the back. If a mistake is made the position is changed.

Lob/drop and backhand: A lobs from a cross court drop: B drops and C hits the cross court drop

“NEW TREND IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN COACHING:

TROY FLANAGAN

Sports Science Co-ordinator, VIS

Exercise Physiologist currently undertaking Phd. In Aeronautical Engineering

There needs to be a strong support system which is athlete centred: coach driven and performance based.

Performance based scientific support embraces : Physiology: Biomechanics: Sports Psychology: Sports Medicine : Computer Science: Sports Nutrition : Sports Engineering: Motor control/decision Making.

Monitoring needs to be done during training and during competition.

Hydration is vital and the athlete should monitor this all the time. He/she must be educated as regards hydration.

Recovery treatment is playing a major role in achievement particularly in those sports which run over a long period.

“21ST CENTURY CONCEPTS FOR PHYSICAL PREPARATION”

GAVIN BRYANT

BAppSci(Human Movement)

Director, Sports Performance Solutions- Human Performance Training System

Adv Dip Myotherapy

Consultant to VIS and Collingwood Rules Football Club

Physical Preparation is a life-long journey for self improvement where clarity of thought can only be truly attained through complete balance between physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual states.

The “neutral position of the spine” is what one is looking for when the spine represents the normal curves: the pelvis is aligned in the neutral position, conducive to good alignment of the abdomen and trunk: the head is erect in a well balanced position that minimize stress on the neck musculature.

If there are posture problem these should be addressed early in the teen as this will prevent back problems later.

The athlete must do correct stretching/warm-up exercises. One can use dumbbell or a large ball in one hand. One must flex from the hip not from the spine.

Yoga offers a full range of fitness benefits. It not only develop flexibility but also strength, endurance and vitality.

‘APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY – THE ESSENCE OF COACHING’

DR NOEL BLUNDELL

VIS Sport Psychology Co-ordinator

Internationally acclaimed in Golf (Sandy Lyle), Tennis (Rafter), Motor racing (Annacone), Australian Rule Football, Table-Tennis, Boxing and VIS Squash

- 1 Need to do an assessment : Psychological Profile : Emotional Competencies
Index: Interview
The areas to be addressed are highlighted
An Individual programme is designed.
Review regularly
- 2 Self Belief Poster is working very effectively at VIS;
Players are put into a room with magazines/glue /scissors. Have to choose photo's of their "heroes": words which epitomise their goals, aspirations, feelings, way of playing, goals in life etc eg Practise makes perfect: Do More: Fun: Practical, reliable, sensible. They add their own photo and make a collage. This is in their room and they must focus on it at various times.
- 3 Long and winding road- see illustration
- 4 Player example: the player draws hi/her Long and Winding road. Eg a 3 year period go through passage eg The journey begins : left job: moved in with parents : began full time training through highlights and low lites – also see chart
- 5 Concentration grids – much use is made of concentration grids – used even during concentration to re-focus.
- 6 Various devices eg light box to develop faster reaction time and decision making speed. Assists with talent identification : Psychological skill development: influences warm-up/decision making/speed/vision
- 7 Use of transceivers: Communication between coach/psychologist with 1 player or both players – can maintain integrity of game: also influences the dynamics of the match and then the behavioural outcomes of the game.
The feedback which is provided is psychological and tactical not technique.
- 8 Various sheets eg Opponent evaluation sheets: Personal match evaluation sheet: and Training evaluation sheet are regularly completed by the players and are then fully discussed

“ TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT USING COMBINATION QUARTER-COURTS”

**PAUL FRANK – Scottish Squash Academy Head Coach: Level 3 Asian Squash
Federation Coach: Grad. Dip.Ed. (background in secondary education)**

Players need to be guided in their play/decisions: eg fast or slow: recovering from the T: hard or soft: nervous or confident: weaknesses and strengths: selection of stroke: temperament : analysis of opponent’s game plan – tactics/ movement from front to back/how pace is handled.

Coaches can compress time and experience