

Coaching the Team: for players 12 years and older

By Tony Waiters

Coaching the Team is a very easy to follow book that offers several exercises for a coach to use during his or her training sessions. The highlight of the book is the clear pictures that present each exercise in a very straightforward manner. The diagrams are accompanied by:

- an explanation of the games organization
- various coaching points to observe
- the challenge (focus) of the activity

The goal of Coaching the Team is stated clearly in the opening pages of the book.

“To help coaches of youth soccer teams set up practices that are enjoyable yet greatly assist in improving the collective team performance.”

The book is broken into five sections:

1. The World’s Greatest Game- an introductory section that outlines the goals of the book while offering age considerations for the coach to ponder. It also touches very briefly on psychological and physiological elements of the game.
2. Deployment of Players- “System of Play”, proper support- both attacking and defending, thirds of the field, the off-side rule.
3. Practice Section 1- Team games, 5v2, Numbers Game, 4 v4, Zone Game, etc.
4. Practice Section 2- Shadow Play, introduction to it and how to use it to your advantage
5. Practice Section 3- Large Numbered games, the build-up to 11 v 11.

Summary:

Although there are several nice activities a coach can use with his/her team, the book is a bit outdated. Published in 1990, the book doesn’t account for two major rule changes since publication. The role of the goalkeeper has significantly changed with the elimination of the pass back, prior to 1992 the keeper was allowed to handle the ball on any ball played to him. Also, the off-side law was changed to “even is on” when at the time of print (of this book) “even was off”. Having said that, there are several good small group games that will help players develop through enjoyable exercises. The book does meet its’ goal of providing activities that are enjoyable and promote learning, but I believe there are better more recent resources in our library.

Not Recommended

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