

EDITOR'S NOTES

24.10.06

So there are coaches out there who read the Technical Journal! I have had a number of responses to my plea for feedback on Allan Lewis's article on how we play. Many have simply been a simple 'agree' or 'disagree', but it is heartening to know that you do have an opinion – and that some are prepared to let us in on it.

The Technical Journal will be even better if you, the readers, contribute. Many coaches out there underestimate the value of what they have to offer – usually because, "Well, I just coach at a low level." Opinions from this 'low level' will probably hit the spot for the majority of other coaches because they too are dealing with players who are not exactly over-endowed in the basic skills department. We get lots of advice that would apply to a highly skilled outfit, but many teams will require very basic advice. So do not worry if you are not dealing with an international team – your experiences and thoughts are valuable.

John Smith sent in an interesting e mail on Allan Lewis's article:

"I have just taken over coaching a side which plays at quite a low level and it has accepted that it needs to change its style of play. They have always had big forwards in the past (not any more, though) and have played a 'stick it up your jumper and go' type of play. This seems to be a trait in Shropshire.

I totally agree with Allan Lewis (who I have seen coach) that the players must 'experience' the situation to make decisions. I sometimes work with coaches (I am a Level 1 Tutor) who comment that certain players have poor decision making and I try to explain that they must let those players experience the situations and 'learn' the cues.

On most courses that I have run, all that the new coaches seem to want is a bank of drills. When I explain that I don't use many but prefer to play games, I don't think they really believe it. This very point is the theme that runs throughout each course - let them experience the situation and bring decision making situations into their coaching, along with mistakes, and let the players sort the problem out themselves as if they were in a game situation.

In fact, sometimes you feel a bit like a missionary trying to spread the word. I would like to see some articles by Ian McGeechan and Brian Ashton, two coaches who I greatly admire."

I did explain to John that I too would like lots of material from Ian McGeechan and Brian Ashton and I will certainly try to get some. There are Brian Ashton inspired

articles in previous Journals and in the Archive, but I have to agree that we would do well to get more.

So, coaches, your response is improving. Read Andy Dixon's piece this week and let me know what you think of his ideas.

Keith Richardson, Editor.