**AFL Coaching Newsletter - May 2010**

Coach AFL this month goes to Leigh Matthews for advice on how to handle a significant loss. Jimmy Bartel gives his perspective on the impact and value of junior coaches. We go to Wayne Goldsmith to consider the questions parents want to know as their children commence their involvement in football for another year. We provide a drill that will improve your player's vision, reflexes and ball handling. The newsletter provides an update on the AIS/AFL Academy tour to South Africa and the female coach level 2 scholarship holders. There are updates from states and a calendar of state coaching events coming up.

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## HOW TO HANDLE A DRUBBING

**By Leigh Matthews**

The fact that the six-month AFL season is more like a marathon than a sprint is really self-evident. It is a theme that will be pushed in a large variety of ways and means by all 16 coaches.

The reality is that while each round provides a glimpse of what is to come, ultimately a win or a loss is the only tangible result that survives into the months ahead.

Collingwood fell in by a solitary point against the unfancied Demons, but still all importantly gained their second win and got the valuable four points. Melbourne, despite a gallant performance, still came away without the win. Once the final siren sounds and the game is decided, it is all about stimulating ongoing optimum performance.

A big part of the coaching art is to react to the post-game mood and then set the tone and agenda for the week ahead.

At this time it is always wise for every coach to remind himself that he is not a fan and, despite feeling as a supporter might, resist the temptation to act out of either anger, frustration or euphoria.

The other principle I have always believed in is that the coach should be opposite to the rest of the world. St Kilda thrashed the Kangaroos by 104 points. Saints coach Ross Lyon will temper his praise because everyone else is telling the players how good they are. More importantly, North Melbourne coach Brad Scott must lift the sagging morale and belief in his team, which took a big hit so early in the 2010 season.

It was noteworthy and good policy that post-game Scott met his bedraggled and

demoralised team before they left the field and walked off amongst his players.

No yelling or screaming. Instead, a calm and controlled leader.

His actions said a thousand words - that he is with them and that they will work through this together.

What Brad said behind closed doors, only club insiders will know. But I would be very surprised if he did not take a caring and supportive approach to start a psychological recovery process after such a heavy loss.

Some fans might like the idea of coaches giving a big losing team a negative fire-and-brimstone spray. However, in my experience, players will react better to a positive attitude, particularly when only two rounds have been played and there are still 20 long weeks to go.

In retrospect, I only wish I had always taken my own advice. Unfortunately the heart will sometimes rule the head despite all logic to the contrary.

*Leigh Matthews article courtesy of http://www.afl.com.au/. Leigh's weekly articles appear exclusively during the 2010 Toyota AFL Premiership Season on the AFL website. Book mark this page to follow all of Leigh's articles this season - : Leigh Matthews 2010*

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**FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW**

**By Jimmy Bartel**

I still remember playing footy as a kid in the pouring rain at eight in the morning. A lot of those kids I ran around with, completely soaked on those cold mornings, are still my mates today.

So many people have great memories of their junior football days, and the relationships that were formed in those years. I could go on for days about the amazing and time-consuming work that our coaches and football department do that makes us into the players we are at Geelong. But the players they get to work with when they're drafted into the club are the product of some unsung heroes of the football world - junior football coaches.

It's the coach who sets the atmosphere who can make it a positive experience. These wonderful people volunteer their time all because they love the game so much. They don't have to do it. They have families, work and many other life commitments. They would be tired during the week when they front up on those frosty nights to put some young chargers through their paces in the depths of winter. I'm sure they would like to sleep in on a weekend, but instead they're getting up at the break of dawn to steer their budding young footballers to victory.

Neil Lynch, Greg Riddle, Craig Stack, Brad Lee and John Bright are some of the names you might know around Geelong, but for everyone else, these are the men I owe a great deal of gratitude to for teaching me the right way to play football, as well as being

respectful off the field.

Never underestimate the role of a junior coach in any sport as a role model to young minds. I was very fortunate to not only have great coaches, but even better people to look up to. They taught me about playing football the right way - play the ball hard, train hard and work hard. They instill that old theory in you - the harder you work, the luckier you get. But even with all the junior coaches I had, it was still always about fun. I think that's really important for all kids and junior coaches to remember.

It was as serious as it had to be, but it didn't go too far that you lost the enjoyment for it.
Once you get into senior footy, it all becomes too serious, so junior coaches just need to let kids play and enjoy the game. Sure, I learnt to play all positions, and to kick on both sides of the body, but it wasn't drilled into you in army-style, it was always a bit of fun.

I think parents have their role to play in all of this, too. There's no point putting pressure on young kids. You've just got to let them develop, and let them want to play the game. You don't want them resenting the game because that'll cause problems afterwards. Let them have fun with their mates and know that you don't have to be the best player or a future champion. If they've got mates around, you're much more likely to want to keep going.

I might be talking about experiences from my club, Bell Park, but every club in Geelong could rattle off a list of names of similar people who help keep their club ticking over. Every player should never forget where they've come from because that same club you ran out for when you were a youngster has always been proud to say that you are theirs.

*This article is reprinted courtesy of the Geelong Advertiser and Jimmy Bartel.*

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**DRILLS**

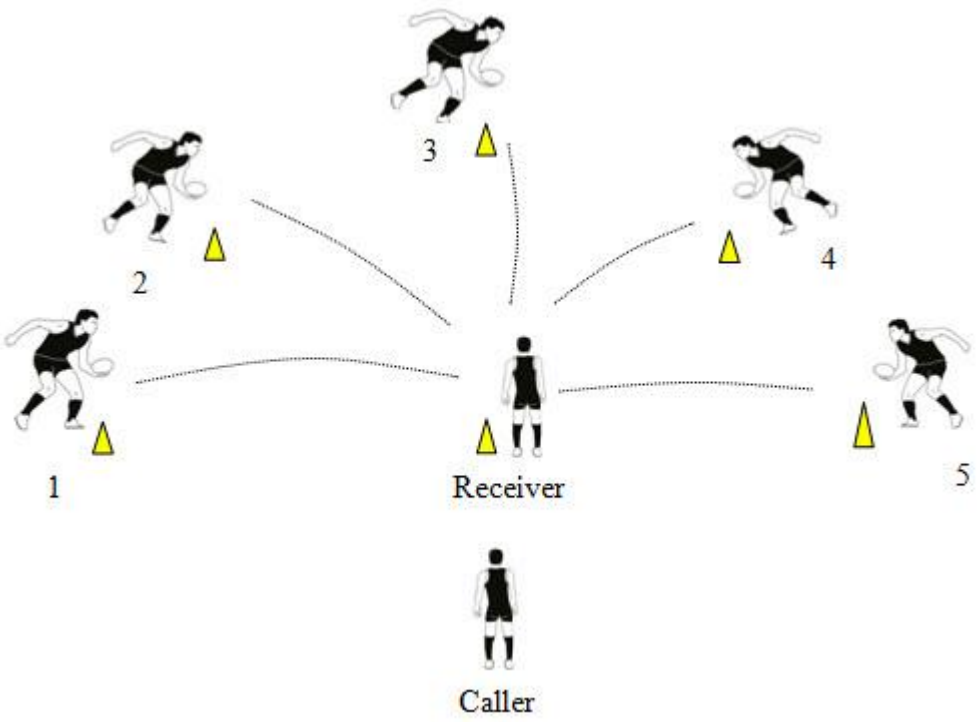
This month we provide a drill that focuses on improving vision, reflexes and ball handling:

**1. 180° Vision Drill**

Requires:
- 7 players
- 5 footballs
- 6 markers

Aim:
To increase players' vision to create or identify opportunities in a game/match situation.

Drill:




1. 5 players start with a football each. These players are each allocated a specific number. The caller then calls out "ready, set..." and then raises a certain number of fingers on their hand to indicate which player with the ball is to handball. This allows the players with the ball to see who should handball the ball without the receiver being aware who is actually going to handball the ball.
2. On the words 'ready, set...' all the players with a football dummy a handball to the receiver, except for the player who the caller has indicated should handball.
3. The receiver should stay 180° to players 1 & 5 to test their 180° vision.
4. After 8-10 turns players should rotate through the positions.

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**FOOTBALL PARENTS – SUPPORT, SMILES AND SPORTING SUCCESS**

Parents love their children and want nothing but the best for them. Behaviours that others may see as "pushy", sporting parents see as "lovingly supportive". As parents, some for the first time, prepare for another season of Australian Football, **Wayne Goldsmith** from Moregold Sports considers some of the common questions from parents who want their best for their child.

The questions considered include:

- How many times should a child train each week?
- When should a child specialise in a sport, event or position?
- Do young AFL players need a special diet?
- How do kids balance school and sport?
- When should my kids start strength training?
- What types of exercise are best for young (i.e. pre teen) athletes?
- How do I choose a good coach for my child?
- What are the common characteristics of champion players?
- What can I do to help my child achieve their goals in AFL?
- How can I tell if my child is doing too much?

Click here to view Wayne's article and answers to these questions.

*Over the past 15 years, Wayne Goldsmith has reviewed high performance sports programs in professional football (including AFL, NRL and S14 Rugby Union) and several Olympic sports. For more information go to www.moregold.com.au or read Wayne's views on his blog www.sportscoachingbrain.com.*

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**AIS/AFL ACADEMY SQUAD TOURS SOUTH AFRICA**

The 13th Intake of the AIS/AFL Academy has just returned from its tour to South Africa. The Tour for the 30 scholarship holders & staff commenced in Sydney with a challenge match against the Swans Reserves; followed by 12 days in South Africa; and concluding in Perth where they played the curtain raiser to WCE v Essendon at Subiaco Oval.

The South African tour provides life changing experiences for the boys and a realisation of how lucky they are to have the opportunity to live in Australia and pursue a future playing a game they love. In South Africa they represented their country against a representative South African team, visited local townships, the Apartheid Museum & Nelson Mandela's former prison on Robben Island, as well as conducted "FootyWILD" clinics (South Africa's version of NAB AFL Auskick).

The trip provided a sense of what being a professional footballer is about under the watchful eyes of the coaching staff – Jason McCartney, Tom Harley, Matthew Lloyd and Michael O'Loughlin. The AIS/AFL Academy program also provided a unique opportunity for these former AFL stars to coach/mentor in an elite junior environment.

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**LADIES TUNED INTO COACHING PATHWAY**

You would be hard pressed to believe there are currently only five female AFL Level 2 accredited coaches in Australia given there was recently 18 applicants for the AFL's 2010 Female Coach Level 2 Accreditation Scholarship. In the end the States and Territories decided the quality of applicants was so good that they would help kick in extra funding over and above the AFL's to support their keen female coaches. Full scholarships were awarded to encourage female coaches to gain Level 2 accreditation and assist with the costs of attending the National Coach Conference in 2011.

One NSW recipient, Krissie Steen, was typical of applicants saying, "I have my sights on becoming a Level 3 coach with the desire to coach a women's team from NSW in a national competition."

Kendelle Treloar, who has already commenced her involvement in the program by attending the recent level 2 coaching course held in Sydney, was enthusiastic in recalling the weekend saying, "I learnt so much at the level two course. It was excellent and I've already been implementing a lot of the principles at training. The proof is in the pudding, people have already noticed the players making better decisions and they seem to be building more confidence in their own abilities. Definitely empowering!"

The following female coaches have been awarded scholarships:
- Sarah McFarlane (ACT)
- Kendelle Treloar (ACT)
- Lisa Roper (NSW)
- Krissie Steen (NSW)
- Meagan Simpson (NSW)
- Shannon McFerran (VIC)
- Keltie Blake (VIC)
- Deanne Coates (WA)
- Tiff Harken (WA)
- Julie Nicholls (WA)
- Meagan O'Mara (WA)
- Melissa Cook (WA)
- Sarah Michell (WA)

For more information on the AFL's Female Coach Scholarship Scheme contact Jan Cooper (AFL Manager: Female Football Development) at jan.cooper@afl.com.au or (08) 9287 5523.

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**TELSTRA ASSISTANCE FUND**

Apply for a 2010 Telstra Assistance Fund (TAF) equipment grant. These equipment packages are provided to clubs to help support community football. To apply, go to www.ideasforgood.com.au/taf

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**STATE NEWS**

## 2010 COACHING COORDINATOR PROGRAM

The 2010 AFL NSW/ACT Coaching Coordinator Program is underway with the first of five sessions taking place in March. Many clubs from the Greater Sydney Juniors (GSJ) competition have progressed through to their second year of the program, whilst a number of GSJ clubs are getting involved for the first time. Sydney Swans assistant coach John Longmire launched the evening which included sessions with Leading Teams' Garie Dooley.

The program is also being run in the ACT in 2010 with junior clubs Belconnen, Cooma , Eastlake, Gunghalin, Magpies JFC, Marist AFC, Queanbeyan, Tuggeranong, Weston Creek and Yass accepting offers to join the program in its inaugural year in the region.

The Coach Coordinator Program trains and educates nominated club representatives in developing a strong coaches network back at their respective clubs. We provide ongoing education and support to ensure that club, coaches and players are having a positive and enjoyable experience in AFL football. It has been fantastic to see the coordinators implementing these practices back at their clubs.

The Coach Coordinator Program will continue in early May.

## 2010 COACHING COURSES

Many thanks to all the presenters and participants who attended our Level 1 Coaching Accreditation Courses throughout March. Over 400 new coaches attended courses across the state in Sydney, Blacktown, Canberra, Wagga Wagga, Narooma, Maitland, Killarney Vale, Wollongong and Coffs Harbour. Sydney Swans coaches John Blakey, Peter Berbakov, Daniel McPherson and Ben Moore joined a raft of AFL NSW/ACT Talented Player Program Coaches in presenting at the courses. It is always fantastic to see so many new coaches willing to learn, develop and experience the enjoyment of coaching football at the junior, youth and senior level.

## GOOD LUCK IN SEASON 2010

With Season 2010 getting underway AFL NSW/ACT wishes all coaches the best of luck with their coaching experience this year. Armed with a positive attitude and a little planning your season will no doubt be the rewarding and enjoyable one you desire. All the best.

## AFL QUEENSLAND LAUNCHES CLUB COACHING COORDINATOR PROGRAM

AFL Queensland launched the Club Coaching Coordinator program with over 40 coordinators across South Queensland attending the first session with some ex-AFL Stars being amongst the participants.

Danny Craven, St Kilda, Scott McIvor, Fitzroy & Brisbane Bears and Robert Scott, Kangaroos & Geelong have all taken on the Coaching Coordinator role at their local

junior club in 2010. The talented threesome will add plenty of experience to the group and hope to also gain knowledge from other course presenters & coordinators.

Danny Craven, now at Everton JAFC after having coached QLD at U/18 and Senior level commented "The Coaching Coordinator role is a very exciting program that gives us the opportunity to learn from the guys who are at the top level" Craven adds "It's also about the clubs sharing ideas with each other to improve not only their own club but the game in general in Queensland"

McIvor now at Wilston Grange AFC and Robert Scott down at Burleigh AFC will act as mentors to all other coaches at their respective clubs as well as conduct coaching assessments and encourage a positive environment for all players, coaches and volunteers.

AFL Queensland Coaching and Volunteers Manager, Richie Lyons, sees the Coaching Coordinator program as a terrific opportunity for Community clubs to have access to the state best coaches "We want to improve our local coaches giving them the support and education they need to do their job at a better standard" Lyons said.

The program is being supported the Brisbane Lions and Gold Coast Football club's coaching staff who will be on hand at the 4 yearly sessions in Brisbane and the Gold Coast to share their knowledge and ideas as well as the AFL Q State League coaches.

Unfortunately Gold Coast Coach Guy McKenna was unable to attend the launch at the Gold Coast due to an untimely training injury which saw the former West Coast great sporting a broken leg. With McKenna unavailable Gold Coast FC CEO Travis Auld made an appearance in support of the program.

**DEMON'S FOOTBALL - AN ASSISTANT'S VIEW**

While Melbourne coach Dean Bailey and his assistants were working on the Demon's game plan Football Manager Chris Connolly and AFL Victoria Development Managers Mark Wheeler and Shawn Wilkey were hosting over 100 community football coaches from the southern and eastern regions of Melbourne.

This community "Coach the Coaches" session was part of the AFL Telstra Community Camp and a joint initiative between the Melbourne Football Club and the regional branches of the Australian Football Coaches Association which enabled local coaches to watch at close quarters a mixture of full ground drills and high-quality training activities performed by the Demons

in preparation for the 2010 season.

Assistant coach Kelly O'Donnell provided an overview of the coaching panel at Melbourne explaining why certain activities were being conducted and then enlightened the audience with his kicking skill philosophy. Development and VFL coach Brad Gotch demonstrated the kicking drills with O'Donnell explaining that coaches need to have their players practicing the variety of kicks used in the game including switching the play, set shots for goal and kicking to a team mate's advantage, as well as making sure practice drills emulate what happens in a game.

Then assistant coaches Scott West and Mark Williams outlined their coaching philosophies, which included teaching the basics well and maintaining a high level of encouragement for all involved in the team. West explained and demonstrated a number of focus areas for the Demons midfield players including crumbing, use of handball in congestion, ground level skills and body work. Mark Williams was looking for flexibility from the midfield, as in today's game the traditional roles have evaporated with midfield players needing to play all positions at either end of the ground.

The Melbourne "Coach the Coaches" session kick started the Australian Football Coaches Association seminars series which are conducted throughout Victoria by AFL Victoria's team of Development Managers.

WEST AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL COMMISSION INC.

**PARKIN MAKES LASTING IMPRESSION ON WA COACHES**

A TOTAL of 61 passionate West Australian football coaches soaked up the genius that is David Parkin at the AFL Level 2 Coaching Accreditation course held at Murdoch University.

The course was conducted over the weekend of March 13 and 14 and was headlined by former Hawthorn and Carlton Premiership Coach David Parkin.

Parkin mesmerised the coaching group with his amazing story telling ability and understanding of current trends and research at AFL level. Parkin's honesty and his ability to encourage coaches to challenge the status quo was a key characteristic of his three presentations over the course of the weekend.

Parkin was well supported by WA football identities such as Rob Wiley, Andrew Lockyer, David Wheadon, Brad Wira, Simon Eastaugh, Trevor Williams, Greg Harding, Darryl Sinclair and Nick Randall along with sports science experts Craig Starcevich and Ben Piggott.

The information presented was of the highest quality and all coaches walked away from

the weekend much richer for the experience.

David Parkin reinforced the healthy state of WA Coaching by stating: "West Australian community coaches are doing an outstanding role throughout the junior ranks in developing footballers."

"The WAFL Districts need to be acknowledged for supporting the course and having such dedicated coaches within their ranks. The course provided a unique opportunity to further the depth of coaching knowledge and it was exciting to see the commitment and enthusiasm of the coaches involved," Parkin said.

Coaches seeking further information on official AFL Coaching Accreditations and seminars can contact their local WAFL Development Staff or alternatively, the WA Football Commission on (08) 9381 5599.

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**What's On!**

Contact – Jason.Saddington@aflnswact.com.au for further information.

**June**

Level 1 Coaching Course
Junior/Youth/Senior
When – 16th June & 23rd June
Where – Sydney
Venue – AFL Office – Moore Park
Time – 6.00pm to 9.30pm

**November**

Level 2 Coaching Course
When – 6th & 7th November
Where – Sydney
Venue – AFL Office – Moore Park
Time – 9.30am to 5.30pm

Contact – Steve.Teakel@aflvic.com.au for further information.

**May**

AFCA Victoria – Regional Coaching Seminars
Topic – Game Day Planning
Presenter – Anthony Allen, Northern Knights Coach
When – May 8
Where – Northern
Venue – Preston City Oval
Time – 11.00am to 3.00pm
Contact – Ashley Brown – 03 9435 1264

AFCA Victoria – Regional Coaching Seminars
Topic – Coaching the Coach
Presenter – Stan Alves
When – May 10
Where – Goulburn / Murray
Venue – Shepparton United FC
Time – 7.30pm
Contact – Greg Liddell – 03 5822 2366

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**PLAY BY THE RULE**

*Play By The Rules* (www.playbytherules.net.au) is a free website which offers online training, information and resources for clubs and sporting organisations to ensure everyone involved in sport can do so in enjoyable, safe environments, free from discrimination or harassment.

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