



AFL Coaching Newsletter - October 2008

2008 High Performance Coaching Course



The 2008 AFL High Performance Coaching Course was conducted at the exceptional facilities of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in Canberra, from the Sunday 28th September to Friday 3rd October 2008.

Twenty six candidates from the target group of coaches (including AFL Assistant Coaches, State League Coaches, TAC Cup, U19 and Representative Teams coaches) representing each state participated in the course.

A number of AFL club staff, including Nick Ames (Geelong Physiotherapist), David Wheadon (Geelong Skill Acquisition / Development Coach) and Stephen Schwerdt (Adelaide Physical Performance Manager) presented in the course. Other presenters included Neil Barras, a former North Melbourne coaching staff member, senior AIS performance staff and experts from other fields. AFL Coaching Ambassadors, David Parkin and Stan Alves had prominent roles in the delivery of the overall course program.

A major component of the course was the group projects set up through Damian Farrow, AIS Skill Acquisition Specialist. The class was split into six groups with each group comprised of coaches from different clubs and tiers of coaching.



This Core Skill Analysis Project resulted in some excellent presentations, with groups making time over four days to prepare. All group members had to contribute and participate in the final

presentations, teams were required to effectively formulate and deliver their ideas.

The presentations created an excellent opportunity to demonstrate key coaching competencies.

Another highlight of the course was the 2 minute presentations. Participants were required to prepare a 2 minute presentation prior to arriving at the AIS on any topic or issue relating to football. The activity forced the speakers to work within a time constraint, whilst also logically and clearly presenting ideas. All participants did an outstanding job, some of the more memorable topics included: Matthew Lappin's "Bringing Back the Spekkie!" and Andrew Mellor's passionate presentation on why Tasmania should have an AFL Team.

Feedback from the course candidates generally reflected the relevance of the course and its continuing personal challenge for them. They indicated that much of the experience would be very helpful in their future roles.



A key element of the High Performance Course is the interactive presentations and group discussion which allows coaches to interact, and learn from their peers. Overall, the course was very successful and highly recommended by the attendees.

Course highlights listed by the group included Clark Perry's Performance Psychology for coaches, Steve Ball's Coach Co-achieving exercise, Damian Farrow's session on Skill Acquisition, and David Wheadon's discussion about Developing a Coaching Philosophy. Leigh Russell's (EFC) session on Communication and

Working with Conflict was also very well received and certainly played a key role in bringing the group together. David Parkin and Stan Alves, with their invaluable knowledge and experience were a great resource for all participants.

The 26 candidates will complete the remaining course requirements and assessments over the 2009 season.

The candidates were:

Chris	Rourke	Senior Coach	Ainslie	NSW/ACT
Nathan	Clarke	Senior Coach	Eastlake	NSW/ACT
Rick	Hall	Senior Coach	Waratahs	NT
Chris	Johnson	Ass't/Dev Coach	Brisbane	QLD
Marcus	Ashcroft		Brisbane	QLD
Murray	Davis	Senior Coach	Zillmere Eagles	QLD
Ben	Hart	Ass't Coach	Adelaide	SA
Daniel	Healy	Dev Coach	Port Adelaide	SA
Matthew	Primus	Ass't Coach	Port Adelaide	SA
Adam	Sanders	Senior Coach	Launceston	TAS
Andrew	Mellor	Coach	Tasmania	TAS
Blake	Caracella	Ass't Coach	Collingwood	VIC
Brad	Scott	Ass't Coach	Collingwood	VIC
Damien	Hardwick	Ass't Coach	Hawthorn	VIC
David	Teague	Ass't Coach - VFL Senior Coach	Carlton/Nth Bullants	VIC
John	Barker	Ass't Coach	St Kilda	VIC
Matthew	Lappin	Dev Coach	Carlton	VIC
Phil	Bunn	Coach/Dev Manager	Murray Bushrangers	VIC
Ray	Breed	High Performance Coach	North Melbourne	VIC
Ross	Smith	Ass't Coach	Hawthorn	VIC
Steve	Kretiuk	Coach	Western Jets	VIC
Brian	Dawson	Senior Coach	Swan Districts	WA
Chad	Morrison	Colts Coach	East Fremantle	WA

Chris	Scott	Ass't Coach	Fremantle	WA
Raffaele	Guadagnino	Coach / WAFC Development	Wesley College	WA
Stephen	Malaxos	Dev Coach	Fremantle	WA

Volunteers receive well-deserved recognition

Volunteers in Australian Football play a vital role in the ongoing wellbeing of the game. Without volunteers the game, from local and community level right through to a national level, would not survive. Volunteers provide the administrative, coaching and safety support that ensures football at all levels continues to grow and prosper.



AFL State Volunteer of the Year award winners prior to walking in the Toyota AFL Grand Final Parade. From Left: Eddie Motlop (NT - Wanderers FC), Ken Warren (NSW/ACT - Ganmain FC), Ross Laycock (QLD - Brothers AFC), Tasma Lapham (TAS - North Launceston FC), Allan Chandler (VIC - Coburg Districts FC), Jo Dennis (SA - Sturt FC), Craig Cahill (WA - Eaton Boomers FC/South Bunbury FC) & Andrew Hughes (AFL Volunteers Project Officer).

In 2008, as we celebrate 150 years of Australian Football, there have been a number of initiatives to recognise the valuable contribution volunteers make to the viability of each club. Here we reflect on some of the initiatives that have helped recognise over 3500 volunteers this year.

State Volunteer of the Year Program

At the 2008 Toyota AFL Grand Final, AFL Commission Chairman; Mike Fitzpatrick acknowledged 7 volunteers as State Volunteer of the Year winners. These volunteers, who were nominated by their clubs, each received flights and accommodation for themselves and a partner to come to Melbourne to experience AFL Grand Final weekend. Their experience included:

- o Attending the Olympic Room function at the MCG on Grand Final day where the volunteers and their partners were privileged to sit alongside Ron Barassi and Kevin Bartlett;
- o Walking in the Grand Final Parade; and
- o Attending AFL Victoria's official function at the VFL Grand Final at Telstra Dome.

Brownlow Medal Recognition

During Channel 10's Brownlow medal coverage two volunteers were profiled and presented with an award to recognise their service to Australian Football.

Community Football Weekend

Over Community Football Weekend 1400 volunteers received recognition in the form of a commemorative 150 year certificate or polo.

Volunteer Recognition Program

Through the AFL's volunteer recognition program over 1600 volunteers received recognition through a certificate that commemorates a 1, 5, 10, 25 or 50 year milestone of volunteering.

Volunteers are key contributors to the success of any club. Coaches can play a key role in making the club's volunteers feel valued. Some strategies include:

- Thanking any volunteers when presenting awards or naming teams.
- Develop a volunteer of the month award.
- Encouraging the club to utilise the AFL's volunteer recognition program to recognise the volunteers within the club with free certificates.

Use the AFL's Volunteer Recognition Database to register your club's volunteers for certificates by visiting www.aflvolunteers.afl.com.au and entering your clubs unique username and password. If you can not locate your clubs unique username and password please contact Andrew.Hughes@afl.com.au

It is important to note that the majority of Australian Football coaches are also volunteers. The Australian Football League would like to acknowledge the work of all volunteer coaches in helping make Australian Football what it is today. Thank you!

2009 AFL National Coaching Conference at the MCG

The 2009 AFL National Coaching Conference is returning to Melbourne next year and will be conducted from Friday (evening) 30 January to Sunday 1 February 2009 at the MCG.



As in previous conferences, top coaches and specialists will provide information on the art and science of coaching Australian Football through presentations, workshops and practical sessions.

Work on the development of the program has commenced and coaches who may wish to present at the conference are invited to put in expressions of interest by contacting Jim Cail at jim.cail@afl.com.au

Keep a look out in the coaching section of the AFL website for further information about the conference, including on-line registration details in coming months. More information will be provided in the coming monthly newsletters.

LEVEL 2 COACHING COURSES

TASMANIA

Date: 8th & 9th November

Contact: Nick Probert on 0418 998 361 or nprobert@footballtas.com.au

QUEENSLAND

Date: 15th & 16th November

Contact: Dean McClare on 07 3394 2433 or deanm@afiq.com.au

VICTORIA

Date: 22nd & 23rd November

Contact: Steve Teakel on 03 8663 3015 or steve.teakel@aflvic.com.au

Venue: Mannix College, Wellington Rd, Clayton (opp. Monash Uni.)



More information and an application form www.afl.com.au

Finding the Right Head Coach – the Coaching Merry Go Round

By Wayne Goldsmith, MOREGOLD PERFORMANCE CONSULTING

With all the movements and changes in coaching ranks at the moment, it is worth having a closer look at how to go about hiring the right coach. The most important step for any club, is to first clearly understand what they want from a head coach!



- Do they want a leader – an inspirational head coach?
- Do they want someone who is an expert in change management – someone who can make hard decisions and radical changes to the Club's culture and performance environment?
- Do they want a technical expert – someone with great skills in one element of the game, e.g. attack?
- Do they want a coach skilled with dealing with the media?
- Do they want a hard nosed, disciplinarian with a strong work ethic and uncompromising nature?
- Do they want someone who can build effective teams and get people working together towards a common goal?
- Do they want someone with knowledge and skills in sports science and performance enhancement?
- Do they want someone who has played the game at the highest level and has an understanding and empathy for the playing group?
- Do they want someone who can create leaders in the player group and create a player driven culture?
- Do they want an innovator? Someone who can accelerate change and implement new ideas?

The answer most clubs will give is – “all of the above”.

Most clubs will seek a single person who can meet all of these expectations and more – and they are very, very, very hard to find.

However, most clubs do not NEED a head coach with all these attributes.

The head coach needs of a club will vary over time depending on a range of factors.

A young club may want an experienced coach who can establish a winning culture, systems and structures to help the club get started.

An older club with a more established culture may want the injection of new ideas and energy to revitalise the club, players and program and recruit someone with a new, fresh approach to winning.

Regardless of the needs of the Club, there are some common principles to put in place to increase the likelihood of recruiting the right person.

Five essentials for recruiting the right head coach:

1. Clearly determine what your club needs right now

Don't go on the coach's reputation alone or what the coach has done for another team. Think about the UNIQUE needs of your club right now. A coach who has been successful at one club may not be able to replicate that success in the new environment because of differences in the player group, Club culture, resources, management structure, location etc. The key question you are trying to answer is “Can this coach deliver the outcomes we want at this club now and in the future”.

2. Think about the TOTAL COACHING SKILL SET you want.

Instead of looking for one man to deliver the “entire world”, look to employ a coaching TEAM who can deliver high quality, consistent coaching to the club. For example:

- A STRONG INSPIRATIONAL LEADER HEAD COACH plus “attention to detail” type, methodical, systematic assistant coaches.

- A YOUNGER HEAD COACH WITH A STRONG BACKGROUND AS A PLAYER plus a quality, experienced, older assistant coach with a long coaching background to play a role of guide or mentor.
- A HEAD COACH WITH OUTSTANDING FORWARDS PLAY KNOWLEDGE plus assistant coaches with outstanding attacking knowledge and skills.

Think about the balance of skills, knowledge, character, personality and experience of the coaching and performance enhancement team rather than trying to find one person to do it all.

If you had a very skilful player, but then asked them to be captain, do the tactical kicking, play dummy half, do all the media commitments, goal kicking and all sponsor commitments, it is highly likely their playing performance will suffer.

Head coaches are the same. Expecting them to be all things to all people at all times will eventually result in a compromised coaching performance.

3. Establish the appropriate INTERVIEW / RECRUITMENT process.

If you are looking for a coach with a strong technical background, have the candidates present detailed technical plans and programs at interview and have someone on the interview panel who can ask challenging technical questions.

If you are looking for someone with a new direction for the Club, ask them to present a detailed "VISION" for the future which covers critical areas such as recruitment, player development, playing styles, etc etc.

Match the interview and recruitment process to the outcome you want!

If you were recruiting a goal kicker – you would ask them to kick a few goals before signing them!

Same principle!

4. The six C'S – CLARITY / COMPOSURE / CONFIDENCE / CREDIBILITY / CHARACTER / COMMUNICATION.

The six principles of recruiting a quality head coach are:

CLARITY – Are they clear in their thinking, decision making, vision and direction?

COMPOSURE – Do they deal with pressure? Can they provide leadership in tough times?

CONFIDENCE – Do they believe in themselves and what they say?

CREDIBILITY – Can they get players, coaches, staff, management, sponsors and fans to buy in to what they are trying to do?

CHARACTER- Does who they are as a person enrich the club? Are their values (honesty, integrity, sincerity, humility, work ethic etc) consistent with you want for the head coaching role?

COMMUNICATION – Does the coach communicate well? Can they communicate effectively with players, coaches, staff, management, media, fans, sponsors? Do they communicate well in groups and one on one? As it is with most organisations, poor communication is at the heart of the majority of problems at footy clubs.

5. Establish clear expectations, time frames and deliverables.

It is vital that the head coach, the Board, the Management, the staff and of course the players have a clear understanding of what the vision for the club is, the timeframe that has been established to achieve the vision and the specific goals and objectives for everyone involved in the program.

From the outset establish clear policies, principles and rules so that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities, the standards they are expected to maintain and the time frame to achieve them.

The Head Coach role is an important one for any club. They are often the public face of the organisation and the person held responsible for winning, losing and dealing with the implications of both.

It takes a special person to do it well – and an intelligent, thoughtful organisation to find that special person.

Wayne Goldsmith
www.sportscoachingbrain.com

The SANFL Coach Awards Dinner

Venue: AAMI Stadium, Magarey Room,

Date: Friday November 7th from 7pm to 11pm.

Guest Speaker: Kevin Sheedy (pictured).

State Wide Coach Awards presented, including League Coach of the Year.



Any coach wishing to attend should contact the Development Manager of the SANFL Club in whose zone the coach resides/coaches.

Other coaches should contact Samantha Blades on 08 8424 2286 on a Tuesday or Wednesday.

New Publication – Coaching Edge

Coaching Edge is a new and exciting magazine for all practicing and budding coaches of Australian Football. Coaching Edge will be published 3 times a year and will complement coaching resources currently available.

Coaching Edge is a continuation, in a new format of the respected magazine Coaching Update, and its predecessor Australian Football Coach, first published by the SANFL in 1972.

Each issue will contain several features, interviews with significant coaches, skills, drills, information from the High Performance program, research based information and the views of a range of people about Australian Football. Coaching Edge will aim to extend your thinking and modify your behaviour to improve your coaching.



The magazine will evolve and we encourage the readers to share ideas and provide feedback.

The first issue will be released in late 2008 and includes a feature interview with former Richmond coach and current AFL Director of Umpiring, Jeff Gieschen where he outlines his philosophies and challenges in an extensive coaching journey.

Still time to register for AFL Rec Footy !

Its time to register your team in AFL Recreational Football (Rec Footy), with the 2008 - 09 summer season kicking off this month in competitions across Australia.

Rec Footy provides a great opportunity for all Australians to participate in a modified game of Australian Football in either a male, female or mixed team. Played in a friendly social environment the modified rules make the game less physically demanding and allow people of all ages and abilities to get involved.

The Rec Footy season runs from mid-October till the end of December.

In its fourth year an estimated 70 competitions, involving over 700 teams and 7,000 participants will take part in a Rec Footy competition across the country.



The main changes to the traditional game of Australian Football are:

- The field (100m x 50m) is divided into three zones, a 60m mid zone and two 20m scoring zones.
- The games consist of 2 x 20 minute halves (minimal time commitment)
- Teams score by kicking the football to one of three designated forwards in their scoring zone, only forwards can kick for goal after marking the ball in their scoring zone.
- If a turnover occurs (i.e. when loose ball makes contact with the ground) the opposing team gains possession of the ball from where the ball first made contact with the ground.

- The player with the ball is dispossessed when one or both of his/her flags are completely removed by an opponent (flag belts worn).
- There is no tackling, bumping or shepherding.

So round up your friends and work mates and register your team in the 2008 - 09 AFL Rec Footy summer season. For more information on AFL Rec Footy visit www.aflrecfooty.com.au

HEAD COACH

The Northern Territory Football Club has been established to assemble a team to compete in the AFLQ commencing from the 2009 season.



We are now asking for expressions of interest from suitably qualified individuals to fill the important full time position of HEAD COACH.

The Northern Territory Football Club is looking for a well rounded individual with a strong coaching and development background, including demonstrated knowledge of modern training and match day coaching techniques and who also possesses exceptional leadership and people skills to take on this rare, exciting start up role.

A job and person specification for the position may be downloaded from www.afl.com.au/careers or contact Tanya Kalinowsky at AFLNT on 08 8980 4819 or tkalinowsky@aflnt.com.au to obtain a copy.

Telephone enquiries may be directed to Stuart Totham on 0416 099 607.

Applications Close on Wednesday 29th October 2008.

What's On !

2008 CONFERENCE SEASON

ELITE PERFORMANCE – THE PSYCHOLOGY EDGE

“Providing Athletes with a mental edge”

Melbourne: Hawthorn Football Club, Saturday 8th Nov, – 9:00am – 4:00pm

Hobart: Old Woolstore Hotel, Saturday 15th Nov, 9:00am – 4:00pm

Presenters: Anthony Klarica & Chris Fagan

Contact info@eliteperformance.com.au or call (03) 9889 3837

COACHING SELF AWARENESS

“Improving Sports Performance through Developing Self Awareness”

Bardon Centre, Brisbane, Tuesday 25th & Wednesday 26th November

Call (07) 5445 7994 or click here

www.sportsmind.com.au/library/CE_08_Flyer_2.pdf

ELITE SPORT COACHING SYMPOSIUM

Sport Knowledge Australia; Sydney NSW, 8-12 December 2008

http://www.sportedu.org/product_escs04.asp



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