



# MISA

EMPOLI  
INTERNATIONAL  
ACADEMY



# TOPICS

- *DEFINING THE GAME*
- *EMPOLI F.C. METHODOLOGY TOWARDS TEACHING THE GAME*
- *BEING A COACH IN THE YOUTH SECTOR: ABILITIES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR*
- *HOW TO APPROACH A SEASON: THE RULES OF 3Ws*
- *ESSENTIAL TECHNICAL ABILITIES*
- *1V1*
- *ESSENTIAL INDIVIDUAL TACTICS*
- *MENTAL COACHING*



# DEFINING THE GAME

OUR APPROACH TO THE GAME

## SOCCKER

*Is the combination of complex and unpredictable elements.*



# THE GAME

FOOTBALL IS:

- A game and it belongs to the players
- A mixture of highly unpredictable elements
- A complex game made by mutually interactive elements which cannot be separated
- A game made by situations: you have an opponent
- The result of many different choices made by players
- A beautiful game



# DEFINING SOCCER

## EMPOLI FC METHODOLOGY

Players are the core element of the game from the first to the last day they are with the Club

In order to be at the top of their game, players must be assisted and nurtured by coaches, Club managers and all people involved in the Club

All stakeholders must be on the same page regarding Club policy and curriculum

Primary goal: Develop players from the youngest (grass-roots) to the first team. The main focus is the development of technical skills and tactical abilities based on a players' age and development.

Every player must be provided the best possible environment to grow and implement his/her understanding and abilities.



# DEFINING SOCCER

## EMPOLI FC METHODOLOGY

Empoli FC vision of Youth Sector football stands on three main pillars:

**1. Player's development – 2. Coaching education – 3. Talent Scouting**

A long term program and good organization of training sessions are necessary to fully develop a young footballer

It is essential that every Club has a well defined and shared methodology, implemented by every coach involved in order to get consistency and continuity of work and progress.

Empoli FC foundation is in the Youth Sector: 52 players graduated from Empoli FC Youth Sector and played in serie A in the last 27 years.



# DEFINING SOCCER

## EMPOLI FC METHODOLOGY

First goal is to develop players that are able to decide autonomously what to do in any situation; problem solving and decision making are essential elements in modern football.

Empoli FC vision of soccer considers this to be a game where principles are more important and efficient than stereotyped and standard activities. Making these principles clear so they can be experienced by players we will provide them the essential tools to solve and decide any situation.



# COACHING YOUTH SECTOR

## ABILITIES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR

*A coach's first task is to create an environment that facilitates player's technical, tactical, physical and mental development in matches.*





# THE YOUTH SECTOR COACH

- **AN INSTRUCTOR**
- **AN OBSERVER:** Of players, activities, drills, games, etc.
- **A TEACHER:** Has to know how to teach soccer
- **A ROLE MODEL:** Players follow the coach as a role model
- **A LEADER:** Charismatic
- **READY TO LISTEN:** There is no learning outside of a relationship
- **AN ORGANIZER:** Of training sessions, of the team, etc.
- **A COMUNICATOR:** Has to understand different tools of communication



# YOUTH SECTOR COACH

## ABILITIES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR

### A Coach Must

- Respect the main features and different steps in a player's natural growth and development
- Use adequate behaviour and language for different age groups
- Monitor players both on and off the pitch i.e. School, test results
- Monitor relations and interactions among players in order to prevent possible problems
- Encourage and teach rules of common living and respect towards opponents, teammates, coaching staff, adults
- Encourage autonomy and independence



# **COACHING YOUTH SECTOR**

## **ABILITIES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR**

A coach does not need to be a psychologist but he/she has to know the psychology of players and pay attention to their behaviour as this can influence their soccer and personal development.



# YOUTH SECTOR COACH

## ABILITIES and SKILLS COMPETENCE

TECHNICAL-FOOTBALL  
COMPETENCE

METHODOLOGICAL  
COMPETENCE

COACH

ORGANIZATIONAL  
COMPETENCE

RELATIONSHIP  
COMPETENCE





# SOCCER COMPETENCE

## A COACH HAS TO:

- Know how to teach technical and tactical aspects of modern game; the how, where, when, why and for whom
- Recognize that the development of skills requires cognitive inputs and situations
- Know the elements that can influence the teaching/learning process of the technical, tactical, physical and mental pillars
- Be able to demonstrate what he/she is teaching
- Choose activities and drills according to the main goals and objectives of training session, for the month, the season, etc.
- Change, vary, alternate activities and drills according to feedback from players
- Observe: Identify mistakes, provide corrections and advice



# METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE

A COACH HAS TO:

- Encourage player's to develop independent soccer thinking ability
- Combine analytical and situational training methods and approach
- Introduce situational to analytical activities and *viceversa*
- Coach and stimulate players creativity using principles of game versus stereotyped drills
- Propose activities that are coherent with their development and ability
- Pursue specific and clear goals throughout the season
- Explain drills and activities with quick, clear explanations: the **3 Cs RULE: CLEAR, CONCISE, COMPLETE**
- Correct one mistake at a time
- Create passion and excitement for the game



# METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE

A COACH HAS TO:

- Use methods to help players focus such as : Tone of voice, body language, displaying enthusiasm, etc.
- Verify: Measure players learning experience by providing feedback



# ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCE

## A COACH HAS TO:

- Use adequate portions between time of explanations and time of training
- Reduce dead times, no long breaks, seek speedy, quick thinking and high repetition of drills and activities.
- Choose the best vantage point to observe and correct effectively
- Know the different phases of a well designed training session
- Ensure players' safety first and foremost
- Require punctuality by players
- Be the first one there and the last one to leave field





# ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCE

A COACH HAS TO:

- Organize field and the activities before starting training session
- Make players responsible for equipment
- Use adequate *amount of* space for the activity or drills based on the number of player
- Rotate players' position on the field to let them experience different points of view and technical movements.
- Use different geometric patterns for drills and activities: Line, row, circle, square, rhombus, triangle, etc.



# ***PLANNING AND DIDACTICS: HOW, WHEN, WHERE AND WHY***

*A soccer player's development is only possible if we consider it as a long term journey, coherent with the nature and evolution of the game*



# PLANNING

- Planning: Define annual, monthly, biweekly, weekly and day objectives
- Define psychological attributes and set objectives according to age group based on their physical, technical and mental capacity
- Define and set objective for different forms of work during the season
- Define and set the single cycles of work, keeping in mind previous and future cycles
- Planning needs to be: **LOGIC, COHERENT** and **COMPLETE**
- **Plan SMART: Specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, timely**



# PLANNING

- **TRAINING SESSION:** Single unit of planning includes means and methods of training
- **MICRO-CYCLE:** Corrisponds to a week; however, it can be shorter or longer depending on players' feedbeack
- **MESO-CYCLE:** Group of 4-5 microcycle, variable with players' feedback
- **MACRO-CYCLE:** Group of Mesocycles
- **ANNUAL PLANNING:** Group of all seasonal macrocycles; the road map to make it through the season and towards the main goal of developing soccer players



# WHAT TO TEACH

- **FUNCTIONAL GAMES**
- **DRILLS**
- **BALL POSSESSION**
- **SITUATIONS**
- **SMALL SIDE GAMES**
- **SCRIMMAGE**
- **RONDOS**



# FUNCTIONAL GAMES

- Main goal: Having fun
- Specifically indicated for young age groups
- Main idea: Allow players to have fun by putting in activities with some elements specific to the game of soccer, specifically related to coordinative skills and abilities.
- They can be grouped in:
  - 1) **INSTRUCTIONAL GAMES:** Street games
  - 2) **COMPETITION GAMES:** Games between two teams with a result in mind
  - 3) **SITUATIONAL GAMES:** Numerical situations such as 2v1 and 2v2



# DRILLS

- A means of training where the main focus is the player-ball relationship and eventually, one teammate and one goalkeeper
- No opponents: Focus on technical aspects and fundamentals
- Can be grouped in:
  - 1) **INDIVIDUAL:** Technical-coordinative focus
  - 2) **WITH TEAMMATES:** 2, 3 and 4 players with focus on passing and timing
  - 3) **COMBINATIONS:** Combination of multiple movements while in motion
  - 4) **IN GROUP:** Spread out and free; important for timing



# BALL POSSESSION

- Includes: player, ball, teammates, opponents sense of direction to field
- No finishing
- Players allowed to experiment and develop a possessive attitude towards the actual game without the pressure of goal scoring
- Develops player's technical passing/receiving and tactical abilities
- Ball possession as mean of work, often uses a neutral player/jolly in order to increase possession by providing numerical superiority to team in possession.
- Rondos are a way to achieve possession





# SITUATIONS

- It includes: player, ball, teammates, opponents and directionality on the field (attack and defend)
- It develops the technical and tactical abilities of players and the ability to cooperate in a team
- They can be grouped in:
  - 1) **GENERAL:** 1>1, 2>2 in sectors, as well, 2>1, 2>2 etc.
  - 2) **SPECIFIC:** With roles, attack vs defense (3>3, 4>4)
  - 3) **INSTRUCTIONAL:** Situations focused on teaching the principles of the game to the players



# SMALL SIDED GAMES

A small sided game or SSG must contain a specific topic addressing the main topic of your training session.

## SCRIMMAGE

- Essential from U8 to U12, it's the best way for a coach to identify problem areas, assist in making correct decisions to improve competence of players.
- It's necessary to reduce coaching interventions while observing player interactions during game.
- Avoid paralysis by analysis, ask players open questions to stimulate soccer IQ



# PLANNING AND INSTRUCTING

**HOW:** Respect player's phases of growth and psycho-physical development

**WHEN:** Before the beginning of the season, modifying it according to the specific features of the players/team.

**WHY:** Plan your season to maximise the effects of coaching and be able to evaluate the rate of development and learning of players

Thought for the day: Random work provides random results, planned work provides results as planned.