



WCFA COACHES CORNER #6

September 2022



SESSIONS, TIPS & TOOLS

New appointments at Westmorland County FA



PLANNING:
Kick start your coaching
philosophy.

PLAYERS:

How to create a good
environment for girls' football.



DID YOU KNOW?

The first round of the WCFA Senior
Challenge Cup sponsored by Kirkby
Lonsdale Bathrooms takes place on
Saturday 24th September.



SESSION OF THE MONTH!

OTHER NEWS:

FA Play Safe weekend

FA Education update

New appointments at Westmorland County FA



Appointment of new Chief Executive at Westmorland County FA

The Westmorland County FA are delighted to announce the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer as James Pattison.

James steps into the role after having over 5 years experience with the organisation as Football Development Officer. James brings a wealth of experience into the position. His association with the County FA dates back to his younger playing days representing the County Squad at ages Under 14, 16 and 18.

He proudly joined the executive workforce in November 2016 and has made a huge difference in participation across the County, particularly in the women and girls game, creating a new South Lakes Girls League and County FA Girls Player Development Programme.

James set up the more recent Kendal College Under 18 League, providing a pivotal step for those transitioning between youth and adult football. James has worked with countless clubs and leagues supporting their growth and development. James himself managed the Westmorland County FA Representative side and has proudly represented the organisation in all of his work.

New Football Operations Officer

Jim Bone joins the Westmorland County FA as Football Operations Officer, following a number of years in primary education. His background in education means he brings a wealth of experience to the role including working in partnership with national, local and voluntary organisations. Jim has taken a lead role in organising sport at the schools he has worked at, working with local clubs to develop engagement in both girls' and boys' football. He is also heavily involved in coaching and managing in local youth football, as well as previously playing for teams in the Westmorland League.



Planning - Kick start your coaching philosophy.



It doesn't matter if you are a new or experienced coach the beginning of a new season is always a good time to stop and think about your coaching philosophy.

What is a coaching philosophy? A coaching philosophy is a blueprint for every coach to follow. It is your vision, values, and principles that form the base of your philosophy, this will decide what you do, why you do and how you behave as a coach.

Chris Morris, FA county coach developer in Cornwall and ex-professional with Sheffield Wednesday, Celtic and Middlesbrough, outlines his ten top tips to help grassroots coaches develop a coaching philosophy.

1. Think beyond tactics

Most coaches talk about tactics and formations or how they organise practice sessions when asked about their coaching philosophy. Instead, try to think about the values and beliefs that guide your interactions, relationships and decision-making. It is more than just how your team plays.

2. Know what you stand for

A coaching philosophy is a working definition of your values and what you stand for. It should have a direct correlation with, and be representative of, your behaviours and actions. Consider what's important to you: do you consider holistic player development to be a priority for you or are you more results orientated?

3. Think about these questions

What represents my moral standards and integrity? What are my objectives? How can I help my players and what do they need? What ethical and inclusive framework underpins my coaching philosophy?

What would be my personal and team mission statement(s)?

4. Take responsibility and accountability

Answering the questions in point two will give you an outline of your values, personal belief system and mission statement. After that, you have to be accountable for your coaching philosophy. Show that your philosophy is real, robust and tangible.

5. Link your philosophy to football

Clearly demonstrate you will do what you say you will do. For example: if you have been working on developing possession through the thirds in training, what message does it send out if you scream at your players to launch it forward in the last ten minutes because you are losing 1-0?

6. Consider what others would say about your approach

Would a parent or fellow coach be able to work out your philosophy without seeing a written statement or you telling them? Does the way you conduct yourself tell the story of your philosophy?

7. Communicate your philosophy

Sharing your philosophy means that you have openly and publicly declared your intentions and therefore, as a by-product, you have assumed responsibility and accountability for your future actions. Expect to be challenged if you don't do what you said you would do.



8. Write your philosophy down, but live it every day

It is useful to have an actual written philosophy - something tangible to refer and reflect on. However, a philosophy may lack credibility if it only ever appears as a written document and is unconnected to your actual actions and behaviours. The best way to present your philosophy is to live it and to 'walk the walk'.

9. Don't be afraid to tweak your philosophy

Research has shown that 'expert' coaches recognise the effect that operational and organisational context has on a philosophy and therefore adapt their philosophical framework accordingly. Do you fully understand the context and environment you work in?

10. Don't underestimate the importance of life experiences

Recognise the impact of life experiences and how reflecting upon those experiences can help shape your philosophy, making it a moving, ever-evolving framework guiding your behaviours and actions.



For those of you interested in thinking in more detail about your coaching philosophy there is a fantastic 10 minute online course on England Football Learning titled - KICK-START YOUR COACHING PHILOSOPHY



PLAYERS -

With the success of the Lionesses hopefully encouraging more girls to get in to football. We explore simple ways to welcome players to your sessions – especially if they're new to the game.



GIVE YOUR PLAYERS CHOICE AND A VOICE

This is about allowing your players to make their own decisions. It also involves encouraging them to speak their minds in sessions.

A great way to build this into training is to arrange parallel activities of varying difficulty. Then, encourage players to navigate their way through the games. Your team get to choose where they get involved and for how long. And, by giving them ownership, you create a session that's accessible to players – whatever their level of ability.

EXPLAIN YOUR APPROACH

When your players know what you're doing (and why), they're more likely to engage with your session.

At the start of training, explain what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there. Then, as the session progresses, check in with players and make sure they understand what they need to do. Finally, before you leave, take the time to debrief as a team. For example: did you meet your aims? What went well? What could you improve for next time?

BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER

This means listening to understand – rather than respond.

When communicating with players, make sure you:

- face the individual or the team
- show that you're listening (e.g. nod your head)
- don't interrupt or start planning what to say next
- ask questions to clarify meaning – and summarise your understanding
- take note of non-verbal cues, such as tone of voice and facial expression.

GET TO KNOW YOUR PLAYERS

To create a session that engages your team, you need to get to know them as people. After all, what's fun for one person might not be fun for someone else.

By getting to know your players, you can create training that meets their needs and keeps them coming back. At the start of a season, get your team to complete questionnaires about themselves and their interests. Then, as your sessions progress, keep tabs on the little things. For example, who loves to chat about their pets? Who's been on holiday? Who's quieter than usual?

Remember: your players should be at the heart of everything you do.



PROVIDE EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Maybe your team performed really well during training – or maybe there’s something they need to work on. Whether your feedback is positive or more on the constructive side, make sure it’s:

- regular
- specific
- supportive or probing
- delivered in the moment (if appropriate).

Another tip is to use role models. Encouraging players to consider the behaviour of players like Ella Toone and Nikita Parris can help them relate to your feedback.

MAKE TIME TO CHAT

Never assume that your team attend training just to play football.

Sessions offer a chance to connect with others. They’re a great way for female players to make friends, build confidence and establish a sense of belonging.

With this in mind, make sure your training includes the opportunity to socialise. Let your players pick teams, organise different games and rotate between groups. This provides the chance to catch up with people they know – and build relationships with those they don’t. For more tips on engaging new female players, check out the webinar on the England Football learnign website from 20th June this year.

More great resources like this can currently be found on the FA Bootroom website:
www.thebootroom.thefa.com

Session of the month - Breaking the lines

KEY OBJECTIVES

Players will develop their understanding of:

- when to solve game problems as an individual
- when to solve game problems in combination with a teammate
- the elements that can make a good pass: accuracy, weight, timing and disguise
- opening passing lines and receiving in a variety of ways and positions.



ORGANISATION

Set up an area appropriate for the age and stage of development of your players. Then, place a halfway line down.

For this practice, we have a 3v2 – but you can adapt the numbers to suit your players. If you have a large group, set up as many areas as needed.

HOW TO PLAY

The aim of the game is simple. To combine with teammates to keep possession. In our example above, the yellow team have two players in one half and one in the other. They're up against the blue team, who have two players. The first is a 'live' defender – they can move freely in their half. While the second is a screening player – who moves side to side on the halfway line trying to cut off passing options. Think of Calvin Phillips screening the back three or four.



The yellow team have to keep the ball under pressure and get it to their teammate in the other half. They can do this by:

- simply passing it across
- dribbling past the screening player
- one of the two yellows making a run to receive a pass in the other half
- combining with a one-two wall pass to enter the other half.

If successful, the yellow team keep working together to maintain possession and move between the two halves.

Every time the ball is transferred into the other half, one of the yellows joins in to create a 2v1. The screening player then becomes 'live', with the other defender changing roles to screen the halfway line.

PROGRESSION

If you want to progress the activity, you could try increasing the area size to allow for extra players to join the game. Sticking with the same principles as before, a 4v3 game will create a 3v2 in one half at any one time. This provides the team on the ball with more decisions to consider, as they'll have an extra passing option but could have to deal with more pressure from the defending team.

Other news:

FA Play Safe weekend - Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September.

The whole of football in England – at every level – has joined forces to promote 'Play Safe', an ongoing national campaign to focus attention on the vital importance of safeguarding in football.

Play Safe is officially supported by the NSPCC and is not a one-off campaign – there will be a designated Play Safe weekend every season.

This season the WCFA have produced a booklet for all players in teams U11 and below. As well as giving important safeguarding information, there is also an opportunity to enter a competition with some fantastic prizes on offer. Speak to your club secretary or contact us directly here at the County FA.



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