

The Components of Coaching Soccer

The game of soccer is an exciting and fun sport to coach, referee, watch and play! In this article, I would like to provide some good information that all coaches and you, **the parents**, need to know in order to help your young players develop properly.

Coaches who have participated in state level or national level coaching education courses have learned that, to coach effectively, it is important to understand the **four components** of coaching soccer. **You** benefit from this very same knowledge because it helps you understand the game and why the coach does what he does in training sessions and games.

The **Four Components** of Coaching Soccer are:

- The Technical Component
- The Tactical Component
- The Physical component
- The Psychological Component

The **technical component** refers to the technique of skill performance. This is the "how to perform the skill" part of the game. The "mechanics" of skill performance! For example:

- Where to place your non-kicking foot at the instant you strike a ball...
- Pointing your toe down and locking your ankle when striking a ball with your instep (laces)...

The **tactical component** refers to the "decision-making" part of the game. This is the "when, why, what and where" part of the game. For example:

- If you have possession of the ball, should you dribble it, pass it to a teammate or shoot it...
- If a ball has been served (passed) to you by a teammate, should you receive it, kick or pass it on your first touch or let it go...

The **physical component** refers to the fitness part of the game. The elements of fitness include:

Endurance, flexibility, agility, balance, speed, strength, power...

The **psychological component** refers to the intangible part of the game such as:
Mental toughness, emotions, stress, attitude toward self and others...

An understanding of these four components most certainly will help you to enjoy the game more and help you positively effect the development of your children.

Good training sessions are composed of activities that incorporate all four components. This is referred to as **economical training**. Activities that replicate the game itself are the best activities. After all, when our players face their opponents on game day, they play "the game"...they don't compete in "drills"!

In a game-like environment, players work on the technical part of the game (they dribble, pass, etc.), and the tactical part of the game (they make many decisions),

the physical part of the game (they run, stop, jump, change direction, etc.), and the psychological part of the game (satisfaction, disappointment, stress, fun...).

In conclusion, you, **as parents**, will benefit from a simple understanding of the components of coaching soccer. You will understand why coaches do what they do in training sessions and games. You will also appreciate the game and your child's participation in it.

Words of wisdom...enjoy playing small-sided games (1 against 1, 2 against 1, 2 against 2, etc.) with your children in the backyard. Don't coach them...play with them and have FUN! Children love to play with their parents and show them what they can do.

Words of wisdom...enjoy watching your children play soccer! Find something that they do well and cheer them on! What you say and how you say it is important to your child!