

Coaches,

From the games I have seen so far I see the same lines being used in warm up in many cases, players standing around, static, awaiting their turn to shoot at goal, their cardio - vascular system getting no preparation for the upcoming game, thus they start the game cold.

I devoted a clinic to warm up and cool down and offered relevant practices sending a lot of material out that shows how to prepare players specifically for game action and some are using them but many are not. It is up to you but I have to say what I see and offer suggestions to make it better.

What happens in the game is that they aren't warmed up properly when they go on, take several minutes at least to get up to speed, when they are just up to speed they often get subbed off, spend the time on the side cooling down then go on cold again and work till they are up to speed then get pulled off again. Some of them for most of the time they are playing are hardly even in a position of breaking their first wind to get their second (and it is only then they are ready to go), those who are on a good while will get into their second wind but many wont.

I know from my experience of playing how long it takes to break that first wind to allow you to go full throttle.

Teams start so slowly because of it and never catch up especially if they have a big squad with lots of subs. I know with bigger squads and times per player it is difficult but it could still be better. Do you agree? They must break their wind first or in physiological terms replace the oxygen debt so the replacement of oxygen through the efficiency of the lungs catches up with the heart rate. Do they all achieve this?

A coach I discussed this with likened it to going for a run and the first 800 yards you are breathing heavily trying to get your lungs and heart rate up to speed and when you get there and you have broken into your second wind running becomes much easier. We have all experienced that but it takes time to get there. Why not get there before the game so you are ready when you start not 10 minutes into the game when the other team have prepared properly and are flying and are two goals up already, it can happen, it will happen again.

I have seen games where the opposition have pinned us back in our half at the start because they are ready to play up to speed and we are still trying to get there. I think this is worth consideration because it can make a difference, maybe only a small one sometimes but all the same it is worth it in my opinion.

Particularly there are times that are important in a game where we are concentrated and prepared where many goals are scored, these are the first five minutes and the last five minutes of each half. Needed at the start of each half is game up to speed fitness coupled with concentration that can be helped by being warmed up properly and at the end of each game is concentration and guarding against tiredness and thus making mistakes. Warming up properly can help the first one and could result in us dominating the start of a game and maybe scoring a goal.

Tiredness may be a factor more at the end of the second than the first and coaches need to keep their players well concentrated at this time, in my experience in the game playing and coaching there is nothing more disappointing than leading a game or drawing then conceding in the last couple of minutes through players allowing tiredness to cause a lack of concentration and thus a reduction in their skill level because of it.

A thought here is that when you train your players it is good to get them to a point of tiredness relevant to how they would feel on the field of play and have them practice under these conditions to get them used to it so they can learn to maintain their skill and concentration levels when tired and thus perform better in the games at these critical moments. It is all part of the learning process for them.

I hope my comments are of use to you to help prepare your players both physically and mentally for games in the coming season and in the future.

For the record I have attached the Warm up / Cool down clinic info for all 92 of you on the coaches list, some may not have seen it.

Regards, Wayne.