

Glasgow Development – Technical Paper

The Importance of Team Management.

General Explanations:

The importance of team management forming a good working relationship and developing the ability to work as a "team" cannot be overstated. All role descriptions, lists of duties and procedural guidelines should be able to be applied and used by all members of the management should the need arise.

Team Leadership:

- The selection and appointment of a team captain and vice captain are very important decisions. The management should meet and discuss a process to make these decisions. Various factors such as - playing experience, leadership qualities, personality, playing position (is he guaranteed his place) are they popular with the rest of the team and so on may all be factors in your final decision.
- The establishment of a "players committee" can be a very positive step towards the creation of a happy and successful team. It provides all players with a conduit to the management on matters, which may concern them. If you set up a 'players committee' you must be prepared to listen and act if you feel it is appropriate.

Team Discipline:

- The methods that team management use to handle problems of ill discipline may vary from management to management and depend on the situation.
- Minor problems should be dealt with "in-house" as far as possible and the support of the players committee or captain or vice captain can be a valuable tool in dealing with such issues. Some typical measures might include small fines, extra duties (coaching mini/midi teams) apologies and so on.
- More serious offences need to be dealt with fairly but firmly. It is essential that the team management present a "united front" in dealing with such issues. A meeting among team management (which may or may not include the captain and vice captain) should decide upon an appropriate course of action. It is important that all people show a "united front" after a decision has been made. In cases where agreement is difficult then the final decision, in my opinion, should left with the head coach. Some typical measures to deal with more serious incidents would include - suspension from playing, informing players parents (if age grade player) and in severe cases, expulsion from team.

- If the management reach the decision that expulsion from the team is the desired course of action then as far as possible this should be communicated to the Union. Other players in the team should be told exactly why the player is being expelled from the team.
- All disciplinary matters should be dealt with as soon as is practical (given the need for discussion within the management team) and action taken. It is not good practice from a team spirit point of view to leave issues "hanging".

Selection of Team:

- The selection of the team to play is a task best undertaken by the management team. The formal process of a "meeting" should be undertaken, usually a Tuesday but before if possible. The Head coach should take on the role of Chairman of Selectors.
- Players if they are dropped should be told in private before team is announced. They should also be told what thing they may need to improve on to get back in the team. Positive feed back is essential in the development of players.

Management of Reserves and Non First Team Players:

- The good management of reserves is a very important technique in the development of excellent team spirit.
- Reserves need to be clearly briefed on their responsibilities that might include: keep warm at all times. Assume you are on at any minute; keep warming up and stretching i.e. don't wait to be told. Deliver drinks onto the field at every opportunity, carry messages if required, collect tracksuits and other things from the technical area after games.
- At every opportunity stress to players that this is a "team" and that all players are valued and respected. It is very poor management if some players feel other teammates are "special" or treated differently. The development of a high level of team spirit and harmony should be one of the top priorities of the management.

Team Spirit

- The establishment and maintenance of "team spirit" is crucial part of the role of all management.
- A strong sense of unity of purpose and co-operation established among the Management is highly contagious. If the management is happy and united then players will usually follow.
- The use of affirmation and positive feed back should be the goal for the team management both for the group and individuals.

- Directness, openness and honesty in discussions and the management of problems with both the group and individuals is essential and does not conflict with the building of team spirit.

Playbooks and Team Notes

Due to the time constraints involved in league rugby it is important that information that can be forwarded outside of training schedules is passed to all team members. Examples of such information include video or CD of the game, writing report on the game.

The head-coach should oversee the compilation of a playbook and ensure all team members understand the information contained within the book. A playbook could be combined with the writing report of the games to form one document more easily managed by all team members.

The playbook provides team members with information on certain aspects and patterns of play that are integral to how they are to play the game. It is important that all aspects of play detailed in the playbook use common language/terms and the information is directly related to how the team is to play the game. Often playbooks can be complicated and lengthy documents containing information that is not particularly important to playing the game, but more a document showing the coach knows his stuff. Coaches may use diagrams or photos to help communicate ideas and patterns expressed in the playbook.

Aspects of play that may be contained in the playbook include:

- Game Strategy and tactics.
- Team structure, patterns and plays relating to
 - Attack
 - Defence
 - Kick Restarts
 - Scrums
 - Lineouts
- Specific communication for scrums, lineout, restarts, backplay, phases and general play
- Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for team and individual evaluation.
- Player assessment and feedback mechanisms.

The coach will be required to check through the playbook with all team members to ensure understanding and to delegate roles and responsibilities. All team members need to be aware of channels of communication if questions arise from the playbook. These details must be contained with any information forwarded to team members