

Win at all costs VS Development

Something Better Change

Are you a new coach starting out with a bunch of bright eyed children, and thrust straight into a seven a side friendly league? You will find a mixture of 'win at all cost' teams and development teams in the league and probably also a mixture at you club.

Are you prepared to make that decision without any coaching and managerial experience?

The system is against you from the start but hopefully this pro and cons list will make your mind up for you.

Paul Cooper

"Children are not our property, and they are not ours to control any more that we were our parents' property or theirs to control."

— **Richard Bach**

Development

All players have the same amount of playing time. Not only is this fair on all the children but it also means that the late developers have a chance to catch up as they often turn out to be some of the best players.

It also means you have a settled squad with where very few players leave

The team often goes right through until after U18s

Win at all costs

The 'strongest' team always plays with the same kids either on the bench or left out every week.

The ability gap increases and players drift away. A high turn over of players, the win at all cost teams are susceptible to poaching from other clubs as there is little loyalty.

They suffer a big crisis when they move to eleven a side as they don't have enough players. If they survive that crisis the team normally packs up at around U14s/15s when the kids can make their own decisions and vote with their feet.

Development

Rotate players so that they are comfortable in any position on the pitch. The players also read and understand the game much better, before later on settling into the position where they have shown most promise. This creates exceptional players who have fluidity of movement and positional rotation like the Ajax and Dutch, 'Total Football Teams' of the 1970s and the present young Arsenal side, where even a centre back can find himself anywhere on the pitch during a game.

Win at all costs

Stay in the same positions from the start. Produces very one dimensional players who stick to one position and become both predictable and unable to adapt.

Development

Let players make their own decisions and mistakes so they have no fear of failure and therefore are creative.

These players will grow into good all round players with vision and good technique. They also have that match winning piece of skill that can make the difference later on.

Win at all costs

The coach always makes the decisions for the players both in training and in matches by constantly telling them what to do and yelling.

The players can't think for themselves and get out thought by other teams. In the pursuit of winning they are told not to take risks and get rid of the ball. Their passing and dribbling skills are very poor as well as their insight.

Development

It is great fun for the kids who are much more likely to practise their skills at home. The parents do not shout or scream and the kids become confident which will help them throughout life. They take a balanced view on life and realise it has ups and downs.

Win at all costs

The kids have little fun and learn bad habits. They are shouted at and are always under pressure. This can have a significant effect on their behaviour. Football is often not much fun and it just becomes one of a number of interests.

They practise much less away from the team sessions.

Development

Children are taught about fair play and have respect for referees, officials as well as themselves.

Win at all costs

Children are taught that the referee can lose them the game and need to be manipulated. They often have no respect for the other team, the referee, officials the opposition or themselves.

Development

Coaches share information and support other coaches and teams within the club.

They read a lot about football and coaching techniques, go on courses and look to learn so as to develop themselves as both coaches and people.

Win at all costs

Coaches think knowledge is power so do not share information. They are also in competition with other coaches and teams within the club and sometimes even take players from teams within the club.

Make the right decisions and change both your life and the life of many children.