

A Good or Bad Game by Maziya Chete

The sport of futbol (soccer) entails four basic features that are not entirely understood by the average youth player and spectator as they relate to development of the total futbol player. Notions of development are thus reduced to playing a good or bad game as opposed to the process of mastery of the Technical, Tactical, Psychological, and Physical (TTPP) features which defines each game. While playing good or bad has some credence this one-dimensional framework stifles the creative process and forestalls improvement of the requisite areas that defines the process of development. This article is for soccer moms and dads in search of ways to guide their children towards enjoying the game and acquiring a deeper comprehension of the developmental process from the coach's perspective.

The objective of any purist futbol coach is to prepare players to master the game and have fun on that journey. This journey is a long and arduous endeavor which requires patience, passion, and commitment to compete at any level. Whether it's recreational, youth travel, high school, college, or professional the competitive juices begin to flow once the laces are tightened. There is no huge mystery as to how the game should be played; however, awareness of the deep structure of TTPP gives the player an advantage in any game. Furthermore, once armed with this new found knowledge parents will have a greater appreciation and understanding of the game, and especially with regards to the developmental process, in addition, be better prepared and able to communicate in the language in which all participants can understand. Conversations with the coach will thus be guided by a framework rather than generalizations and invalid conceptions that lead often times to tragic ends. This coach believes that the purpose of a conversation is to arrive at a common understanding - anything else is futile. Consequently, the necessity for worthwhile and meaningful

communication in the language of the sport makes for more amicable parent/player/coach experiences.

Within the context of any learning experience theoretical/conceptual understanding is a prerequisite to practical application, soccer is no different; thus TTPP must be the players and parents' guide to learning how to master the basic skills and should also serve as the framework by which development is measured. Often times parents are indoctrinated to accept the notion that winning is everything thus strive to place their children on a so-called super competitive team. The tragedy here is individual development is measured by being on the winning team, who scored the winning goal is celebrated as the best player, and athleticism (which decides games at the youth level) becomes the criteria for being developed or regarded as a top flight player. It must be understood that the US national youth development program along with every other international program is guided by the mission of mastering TTPP. Parents and players can no longer remain ignorant of the developmental process, because the evidence outside the Columbus community contradicts this locally established criteria of the biggest fastest strongest being the best player.

In the final analyses there are no good or bad players. In fact there is not a best player considering that title is a controversial topic yet to be agreed upon. In youth soccer there exist only players on a journey of self-discovery striving to play the game in a dignified, respectful manner and enjoying every minute of the experience. Let's not be totally concerned with playing good or bad because even the greatest players in the world mess up by passing to the opponent, kicking straight at the goalkeeper, over dribbling, losing control of the ball and making untimely decisions with and without the ball. The recommendation here is to shift the focus from playing good or bad even becoming the best player and concentrate on

mastery of Technical and Tactical abilities which buttress the Physical and Psychological aspects of the game. Be reminded that achievement is the act of accomplishing or finishing the game feeling pleased with self and team members. It's something accomplished successfully, especially by means of some physical exertion, application of skill, consistent practice or perseverance. Development is a process that requires sacrifice, commitment and having faith in the teacher who teaches the truth. In the end we are all teachers and students dependent upon each other to learn and grow.