

## **MYSA THROW-INS: July 2010**

**Question: Describe something you've learned from watching and listening to the World Cup that will help you in your own coaching efforts?**

### **Ian Barker**

At a "not what to do level" I would say that the frequency of situations were players asked for opponents to be carded was unacceptable. As such we may actually withdraw our players who try to get opponents booked or sent off. Also the rugby scrum/basketball pick situations on dead balls served into the box, which I think cost the USA a winning goal with a premature whistle, are not be emulated. To the more positive the value of possession in breaking down and wearing out an opponent was stressed in the performances of Spain and Holland as opposed to the England team's rush to give the ball up in continual blunted forward charges. In Germany a balance of youth and experience encourages us to look closely as to how first year players can contribute. New Zealand's stoic defending playing out of a 1-4-3-3 formation albeit with a crude attacking plan reminds us that you can defend and still commit resources into the attack when the time presents itself.

### **Roger Derham**

The world cup was a truly fantastic learning opportunity for me. To see the top players from around the world competing against each other. For me the world cup offered the opportunity to view different cultural styles of play and see how they progressed. The most intriguing for me was the Brazilians. They usually turn up and excite at every world cup. This year, coach Dunga was very defensively minded which for me goes against what Brazilian soccer is all about. No wonder they had an awful tournament by their high standards. Understanding my communities "culture" has helped me design curriculum that is suited to STMA Soccer. STMA is a hard working, coachable and dedicated town (German heritage). Understanding these traits enable me to develop players and curriculum that is best suited to the community that I serve.

### **Rick Sexton**

While most of us are suffering from World Cup withdrawal, the post-World Cup analysis is almost as exciting as the games themselves. Many countries (e.g. England, Italy, France, Nigeria, and even the United States) are deconstructing their national team's performance in an attempt to right the ship. The World Cup provides an excellent opportunity to see how the game has evolved (although the Champions League is taking on a greater role in soccer's evolution). An example would be team shape or style of play. The 2006 World Cup featured teams that primarily used the traditional 4-4-2. In 2010, the 4-5-1 was displayed prominently by many teams. Many national teams will now be looking to emulate the youth development programs in Germany and Spain. While you can copy Spain's developmental system, you can't necessarily clone the likes of Xavi, Iniesta, and Villa. In the end, Spain had the most talent and depth available and were deserved World Cup champions.

### **Rick Sexton (Part II)**

Even though FIFA's 2010 World Cup technical reports have not been released, it seemed as if there were less goals from strikers, less goals from set pieces, less goals from wing play, and less goals in general. Are these outcomes the result of team shape (i.e. lone striker), an increased emphasis on defensive tactics, or a glut in pure goal scorers...or something else entirely. What can youth soccer coaches (and directors) take from the World Cup? Fortunately, possession soccer won out over "boot and scoot." Most of the successful teams attempted to move the ball around the pitch as opposed to pinging it aimlessly with the hopes that the target striker could bring down the ball. While teams were defensive, many games featured wide open play (e.g. U.S. vs. Slovenia). We need to continue preaching creative, attacking soccer. We certainly wouldn't want youth coaches emulating Inter Milan's "sit back and counter" tactics that helped Inter win the Champion's League final.

**Andy Coutts**

Many of the games showed that “overcoaching” can be detrimental to the game. Many teams were ultra-organized and over-structured that tended to limit the individual freedom and flair that makes soccer most entertaining to play and watch (see Brazil). Striking a balance between strategizing to win (Holland in the final) and allowing players the freedom to take risks in pursuit of winning (Argentina and Spain) is a philosophical and tactical challenge that coaches must wrestle with. Players obviously want to win, but coaches should leave room for joy and freedom in that pursuit. Risk-averse coaches are pretty good at suffocating that joy (I know; I've done it myself). Ultimately the best way to avoid risk in soccer is to stay on the couch. Better to merely manage that risk while allowing players their individual creativity and personality to shine through.