

# Auditing your performance

It is only when you sit down to evaluate your efforts thoroughly that you can pinpoint the areas that need more work



John Morrison

**R**ECENTLY I was asked to take a session with a county U-16 development squad. The mentors had asked me to try and improve their quality of play.

I suggested we first find out what the session would target under quality of play.

After discussion the following challenges were raised.

1. Intensity of play
2. First touch
3. Speed of thought
4. Telling movement
5. Ability to make significant runs
6. Advantage ball passing
7. Maximising scores
8. Overall game vision - including tactical and game sense awareness.

The mentors and players accepted my intention to solve or face the challenges by using a performance audit. Information, including an assessment score out of ten, would be recorded on each challenge dealt with.

Information from the players would come by questioning and feedback on how they felt they had played while the coaches would report back on what they saw.

After the warm up, the session



LIFELONG LEARNING... Teach your players to teach themselves

Picture: Stephen McCarthy / SPORTSFILE

ways - more than one - to make it better.

The eight extra game rules played one game at a time were

1. Three seconds on the ball
2. First touch had to be perfect
3. Give and go in support immediately
4. Switch play with all passes angular, not straight line

5. On the run-only passes given this way were allowed as standing still to deliver or receive passes was penalised to a foul blown - as in all eight games per rule
  6. Give the ball before hit - no running into tackles
  7. 1.3 - a score in any three consecutive attacks was needed
  8. Vision - absolutely no noise of any kind for communication
- After positive discussion of each game the following scores were now given for the quality of play for each element.

Players: 7, 6, 8, 5, 8, 6, 6, 7

Coaches: 6, 6, 7, 6, 7, 6, 5, 5

Thus players had felt they had improved from 27 out of 80 in total to 53 out of 80 while coaches viewed improvement as going from 21 out of 80 to 48.

Over the course of the session both coaches and player saw double the improvement in their quality of play.

Discussion afterwards on all aspects of their game through the course of the session - physicality, intensity, technique, tactical, mental and game sense was positive and long - too long for this article.

The head coach later wrote to thank me and noting, 'The players said they understood so much of what I was explaining and showing them. They had learned a lot.'

I replied, 'My job was to make them understand. Once they did they found the solutions themselves.' Learning at its best, as the best learners know, is self taught.

Try a performance audit with your team.