

## COMPONENTS OF COACHING GAELIC FOOTBALL

To ensure that player development is central to our coaching we should try to include work on as many of the following in each session:-

TECHNICAL ABILITY  
ATHLETICISM  
SPEED OF THOUGHT  
TEAMPLAY

If we design our sessions to include each of these four elements the players will not only develop more quickly, they'll enjoy doing so.

Working on **TECHNIQUE** means seeking to improve each player's first touch on the ball. First touch is often only applied to receiving the ball, but if you think about it, first touch covers all techniques - a better kick pass, a better block, a better lift, a better catch, a better solo run etc. We must be prepared to help players to develop the correct techniques and never let bad habits linger. *Players must be coached to perform these at speed.*

**ATHLETICISM** is an umbrella term for physical fitness work. We may be able to develop this using the ball or we may have to set aside a specific part of a session to work on it [e.g. relay races, speed endurance work, circuits] – We can usually develop it on the pitch...but not to the exclusion of everything else.

**SPEED OF THOUGHT** is the part of any session that frightens many coaches. Some tend to steer clear of it and argue that it's something that a player either has or hasn't. Not at all!

All we have to do to develop speed of thought is to set appropriate conditions on a drill or a game during the session.

If we want a player to release the ball earlier and bring team-mates into the game – then put a two-touch condition on that player to help develop the correct instincts. [Do not just put a blanket condition on every player!]

But don't just do it in one session and never again. Repetition is the key - even for 10 minutes of every practice game.

Just think about ways you'd like a player to change - then work out a method to do so in practice - simply hoping for it after a chat will not work!

Better **TEAMPLAY** is the end product. If our coaching is good enough it will enable our footballers to appreciate the value of working together as a team. We must, therefore, use types of games that promote good teamplay [e.g. a line of markers across the middle of a pitch to help players develop defending and attacking instincts]

So...look at your next session - have you included work on these four elements? If not, try it now!