

Weston AYSO Region 644



November 21, 2005

Welcome back to our AYSO Region 644 bi-weekly newsletter.

In this week's edition, Section 1 is designated as the AYSO Region 644 roundup which will highlight what has been going on in our region over the past two weeks and what is up-coming.

Section 2- Lawrence Fine explains in the article titled "The Games Within the Game" that you need to create "numbers up" situations in order to succeed in soccer. One way to do this is by using overlapping runs. Another way is by taking the ball at the defender, even though this goes against conventional thought. Either way using small sided games to practice these situations will make your players recognize opportunities once you move to the full sided game.

In Sections 3-6 we have four articles outlining different aspects and activities related to the game of youth soccer. In the Keepers Corner we discuss the proper stance for a goalkeeper. In Section 4 titled "Soccer Strategy" we discuss finishing crosses with the correct foot. By making the correct decision, you will increase the likelihood of scoring off of crosses. Section 5- Soccer Activities- this activity incorporates the overlapping run with crisp passing. Section 6 is titled "Crossing The Ball". This article discusses that one of the most dangerous crosses occurs just off the end line with the cross going away from the goalkeeper and out towards the attacking players.

Section 7 is our Soccer News Articles From Around the Country. The first article is from Cincinnati.com's Shannon Russell who, in her article "Paying For That Edge- No Guarantees Come With Pressures To Spend" delves into the expensive world of club teams. Parents are feeling the pressure to spend more and more, even though there are no guarantees of athletic success now or college scholarships or financial aid later. Some parents and coaches warn that money is creating an elite sports society for the rich that shuts out the poor. The second article is from USSoccerPlayers and Simon Tanton and is titled "Foreign Fields: Business As Usual". This article takes us "across the pond" to the Premiership League in England and the trials and tribulations of the once mighty Manchester United and their former midfielder Roy Keane. The final article from the New Jersey Herald's Ives Galarcep announces the hiring by Chivas USA of Major League Soccer of former Chicago Fire and Metro Stars coach Bob Bradley. Bradley will try to turn around a side that went just 4-22-6 last season.

Section 8- Today's health and youth sports development article is from Robert Tomasho of the Wall Street Journal whose article "Sleep Apnea Can Cause Strokes, According To Study" is creating quite a stir. It has been upwards of a decade that people have taken stock into the syndrome called sleep apnea- a disorder that causes sleeping people to temporarily stop breathing. In this article you will find out that surprisingly so-called common obstructive sleep apnea more than doubles the chance of stroke or death and severe cases can more than triple the likelihood.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of the AYSO 644 Newsletter. Everything we do here in AYSO is ever evolving. If you have any comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to email to me at Strikersoccer1@aol.com.

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Section 1- AYSO 644 Roundup

On behalf of the AYSO board of directors, I would like to wish you and your family a very happy Thanksgiving Holiday.

On December 3, 2005 we will return to the Weston Regional Park to resume our fall 2005 season. We will be playing the games that were originally scheduled for December 3, 2005 on that date. Any games that are scheduled to begin after 4pm are rescheduled to Sunday December 4, 2005. These games, times and field numbers will be listed on the home page of our website at www.ayso644.org and in the team manager calendar section of the sportslogic technologies website and have already been emailed directly to you if you have signed up for this free service.

In order to avoid confusion, we will be emailing the games on a week by week basis via sportslogic and posting on our website and in the sportlogic message center.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience during the past few weeks. Hurricane Wilma caused a good deal of destruction to our area and we are greatly appreciative of all the kind words that we received as we continued to try to provide the children in the program a place to continue to enjoy soccer during these trying times. We would also like to thank the City of Weston for moving the 4x6 goals from the Weston Regional Park to the West Broward Community Church which allowed us to continue playing in a 3v3 format. In addition, thank you to the West Broward Community Church who, for the last 17 years, have allowed us the opportunity to continue to play at the fields on Griffin Road.

Spring league registrations will begin on Saturday December 3, 2005 and will continue on Saturdays December 10, 2005, January 7, 2006, January 28, 2006 as well as February 4, 2006 at the Soccer Pavilion by Soccer Field 4 at the Weston Regional Park between the hours of 9am and 4pm. The league will run for ten weeks from March, 2006 through May, 2006. There will be one team practice per week plus one age group practice with our trainers per week. All games will be played on Saturdays at the Weston Regional Park. The U-5 division will play all their games beginning at 9am with the U-6 division will play all of their games beginning at 9:45am. All other divisions will have their games throughout the day on Saturdays. Cost of the registration will be \$110 payable to AYSO Region 644. You may also download a registration form from our website www.ayso644.org (under the registration link on the left side of this page) and fill it out completely and mail with a check to : AYSO Region 644 1112 Weston Road, #225 Weston, Florida 33326

We would like to take this opportunity to announce that Luis Blanco and Joe Blanco have become our Directors of Community Relations. Luis and Joe will spearhead our mission of providing the players and volunteers a complete community experience to our program. This will include soccer days at local college soccer games, partnering up with other organizations in the community, AYSO Fun Days, end of the year parties etc. We are very excited about these opportunities and are looking forward to continue to make your and your family's experiences one's that you will remember forever.

Our region is always in need of good volunteers. Experience is not necessary and we will train. Please consider giving back to the community either as a coach, referee, team parent or board member. Our kids need you.

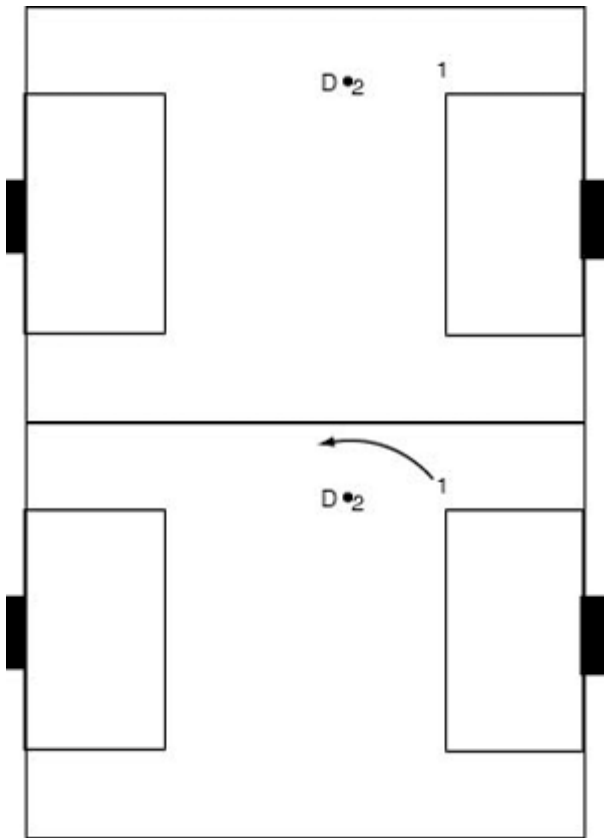
Section 2-The Games Within the Game

Isolating smaller situations helps make 11 v. 11 more manageable.

by Lawrence Fine

Too often, when looking at the game of soccer, people think in terms of 11 v 11 when playing or coaching. However, the key is to find ways to isolate the game into various 1 v. 1, 2 v. 1, 2 v. 2 and 3 v. 2 situations. When coaches and players start looking for these smaller situations and find ways to capitalize upon them, they find the game of 11 v. 11 is much easier.

An example of this would be when a back makes an overlapping run. In most cases, this is done to create a 2 v. 1 situation against a defender to create problems for the defense. To see an example, see the diagrams below. In the first diagram, No. 2 is playing in a 1 v. 1 situation against the defender (D). In the second diagram, an overlapping run by a back (No. 1) creates a 2 v. 1 situation instead of the 1 v. 1.



When teams begin seeking numerical advantages in small-sided situations in full-sided games (both offensively and defensively), they will be more successful in their overall play.

From a defensive standpoint, this becomes extremely important. For example, the reason for formations such as the 4-4-2 is to have more players back defensively than there are attackers coming forward. If the opponent also is playing the 4-4-2, the defending team enjoys a numbers-up situation from the outset. Rarely will you see a team intentionally begin play in a numbers-down situation defensively because there is very little support in case of a problem.

The key to creating numbers-up situations offensively is to have attackers come from behind as well as with diagonal runs. Players who don't make or use runs rarely find themselves in numbers-up situations.

Another excellent way to create a numbers-up situation offensively is to have the player possessing the ball to dribble at a defender marking one of his/her teammates. Doing so forces the defender to come to the ball and quickly creates a 2 v. 1 situation to the offense's advantage. Too many players try to dribble in a way to avoid going at an opponent when the reality is that by going at players, it offers numerous opportunities to create numbers-up situations.

The team that creates the most numbers-up situations offensively and defensively is the team that will win the majority of games.

Editor's Note: Lawrence Fine produces FineSoccer.com, an online resource for a variety of tips, ideas and newsletters related to soccer coaching. A member of the NSCAA Website Development Committee, Fine also has served as volunteer assistant coach for several NCAA Division I men's teams.

Section 3- Keepers Corner

Today's newsletter deals with the goalkeeping stance. Having just returned from two weeks of keeper camps I am amazed at that lack of understanding that keepers have of the importance of the proper stance.

To start with the proper stance entails having your feet shoulder length apart, on the balls of your feet, knees bent and hands out in front (some people prefer having their hands up, prepared to catch a ball chest high while others prefer hands low to make it easier to save the low hard shot. Personally, I prefer the hands low since this is the most difficult shot to save but either way is acceptable. This really is all there is to know about the stance and that is why it's so amazing to me how poorly so called keepers stand in preparation for a shot. Way too many keepers have their feet too far apart so that they are not in a position to move in any direction quickly nor are they able to dive utilizing the power step since they are already out of balance. The second major problem is standing flat-footed. There is no time in athletics that a person will be able to stand flat-footed and be able to move quickly. Their feet must be moving and they must be balanced on the balls of the feet. The third major problem is not having the knees bent at all. As you can tell, this position is no different then the proper position for most sports (tennis, basketball defense, volleyball etc) so it is quite disturbing to me that so few keepers can consistently be in a proper stance. I get so many emails asking about training advice and asking for opportunities for training and it gets frustrating to see these same people make the same mistakes over and over again. The only explanation for this is poor coaching (there is a point when the coaches must emphasize the importance of this) and laziness. Since most keepers in this country have played other sports, they cannot say no one has ever taught them how to stand properly. It's simply a matter that to stand completely upright is easier and requires less energy then to have your knees bent and your feet moving. Unfortunately, this doesn't mean it works. As soon as the ball is in a dangerous position, (defensive half of the field) the keeper must be on the balls of her feet and ready to move quickly. Being in this proper stance will allow you to move quickly in all directions is a very short period of time.

The best way to ensure you stay in a proper stance while in goal is to practice it (novel idea huh?) First of all, get used to being in that position and moving forward, backward and side to side (and all other variations). Being able to move quickly and change directions while in this stance is vital. Next, concentrate on maintaining this stance during all shooting drills and attacking drills. Never allow yourself to get into the habit of trying to make a save or handle a cross from any other position. Lastly, have someone videotape you while playing a game. This will enable you to see just how often you are in a proper stance (and even more importantly, how often you aren't in a proper stance).

What might seem like a real simple topic of proper stance is actually a huge problem in the position of goalkeeping. Proper stance will allow you to concentrate better, move quicker, dive quicker and basically be a much better goalkeeper.

Section 4- Soccer Strategy

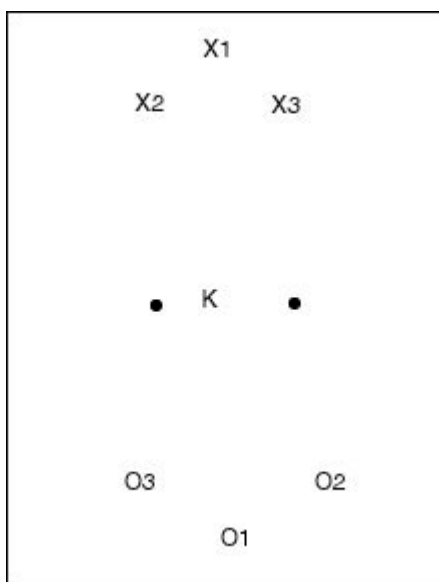
Today's issue will deal with finishing crosses with the correct foot.

This might seem like a simple thing to do as you would think all you would have to concentrate on is playing the ball with the foot that the ball is played to but if it were as simple as it sounds, I wouldn't keep seeing players (including college players) reach across their body to try to finish across with the incorrect foot.

There is actually an easy way to decide which foot to use to finish crosses. Imagine that there is a line from your body to the center of the goal. Let's assume that the ball is being served from the left side of the field into the middle. Any ball that goes to the right of this imaginary line should be played with the right foot. If you can get to the ball before it crosses this imaginary line (which would be ideal) then the left foot should be used. This simple rule of thumb will allow players to finish with the correct foot and eliminate so many of the wasted opportunities in crossing opportunities.

Section 5-Soccer Activities

This is a continuation from last week. Start the exact same way (see diagram below):



This time, O1 has the ball and dribbles at O2. O2 does a takeover then passes to O3 and overlaps around O3. O3 has the option of either finding the overlapping O2 or O1 on the other side. Either way, the player takes the ball to the corner and then crosses to near post / far post runners.

As soon as there is a loss of possession, the same thing starts up on the X's side. If there is a bad shot, this will force the X's to work on receiving balls as well as doing all of the other work.

There are so many advantages to this series of drills and if you think about it, there are almost an unlimited number of variations you can do from this set up.

I simply wanted to introduce these two drills and let you think of the rest on your own.

Next is one of the hardest games I have seen but also one of the more beneficial drill as well.

Section 6- Crossing The Ball

Today's topic will deal with crossing the ball.

A cross is when a ball is played from the side into the 18-yard box of the goal you are attacking. The intention of a cross is to find a teammate who can score off of your cross.

Too many crosses end up either going over the end line and behind the goal or straight to the keeper. Either way, this takes away the opportunity to score a goal.

The two most dangerous crosses are the early cross or the ball taken all the way to the end line and crossed back.

The cross from the end line back out is effective because it is going away from the keeper, which makes it difficult for the keeper to come out and get the ball. It is all going towards the attackers, which makes it easier for them to make good contact on the ball. By playing the ball back out from the end line, the players running onto the ball can simply redirect the ball into the goal and let the momentum of the pass generate the power.

The keys to crossing a ball back out from the end line include actually taking the ball all the way down there (too many players cross the ball 8 yards from the end line and that is actually a very difficult ball to finish). Another key is to get the hips turned on the cross. In order to get any power on the cross, the hips must be facing the intended target so the quick turning of the hips will allow the ball to be played back and with power.

The next key to scoring goals off of crosses is to make sure there are proper runs being made.

Section 7- Soccer News From Around the World

Paying for that edge

No guarantees come with pressure to spend

By Shannon Russell
Enquirer staff writer (Cincinnati.com)

Janet and Dave Drachman recently counted up all the money they've spent since last fall for daughter Jaclyn to play basketball - outside of her Wyoming High School team.

There was one club team that didn't work out, another that required practices 90 minutes away. There were out-of-state tournaments and individual instruction with an ex-college star. Workouts at a rec center. Equipment and Gatorade.

It added up to \$3,850.

"Sports are so competitive today," Jaclyn says, "that you have to have something that no one else has."

Welcome to a high school sports world where more is better, better costs money, and money is no object. The cost of competing in high school athletics has reached stunning heights, according to most of the 175 parents, athletes, coaches, administrators and experts interviewed for this series of stories.

No one keeps an official count, so the Enquirer asked 30 local families to calculate every fee they paid last year for club teams, personalized training, camps, clinics, tours and other year-round athletic services for their kids. The average bill: \$6,100 per child.

Most parents in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky say they're thankful they can give their children every advantage that money can buy. But as costs mount, so do concerns.

Parents also feel pressured to spend more and more, even though there are no guarantees of athletic success now or college scholarships or financial aid later.

More kids are specializing in one sport to stand out or keep up, leading to burnout and injuries from too much of one thing.

Some parents and coaches warn that money is creating an elite sports society for the rich that shuts out the poor.

And many wonder: Is all this costly training helping or hurting high school athletes?

Commitments cost

The National Federation of State High School Associations reports that a record 7 million kids played prep sports last school year. Consequently, many athletes are searching for ways to stand out.

Take Fairfield junior Shaun Alexander. He spent \$2,200 last year playing on a basketball team of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), one of the country's largest youth sports organizations. Shaun received individual instruction and hired a recruiting service to sell him to college coaches. He practiced six hours on most summer days. He says it wasn't enough.

"To get to the top, you've got to be committed," he says. "If not, the game will pass you by."

But what does "commitment" mean?

Kings coach Steve Contardi says tennis is now a 12-month sport that can cost an average player \$12,000 a year for private lessons, clinics, tournaments, travel, equipment and a tennis club membership. Beechwood swing coach Wayne Kelley says prep golfers are buying \$2,000 top-of-the-line clubs that, as novices, many don't need. Most athletes feel pressure to do something - however big or small - to keep up in their sport.

"I don't like to go one day without touching the ball," Hamilton sophomore basketball player Danielle Lewis says. "I almost feel bad, because I know someone is working harder than me."

Practice isn't always enough, kids say. Ludlow junior baseball player Kyle York says he would be an "average or less than average" athlete if his parents hadn't spent \$4,800 last year for summer and fall baseball, private instruction and batting cage fees.

"I wouldn't be as skilled," says Matt Koewler, a Glen Este senior goalie whose parents paid \$5,000 last year for his soccer training. "I wouldn't have as much knowledge of the game."

Sometimes, there are once-in-a-lifetime sports opportunities that parents can't pass up, even if they're costly.

Elizabeth Midkiff, mother of Fairfield senior soccer player Drew, helped organize a two-week trip to England so 19 Ohio Elite Soccer Academy players could visit the Manchester United professional soccer franchise. For \$3,200, Drew met and trained with Manchester United's coaching staff, toured the team's facilities and played a match on its training field.

Club sports boom

Young athletes say supplemental training has sharpened their skills and given them confidence to excel in high school sports. But most say the training is most crucial *outside* high school - in club sports.

The cost to compete is largely affected by a phenomenon that pits club teams against each other and against high schools for athletes' time and skills. In exchange for money, these organizations give athletes what high school sports can't: National competition, extensive travel and exposure to more college coaches.

Some say club sports could undermine the role of high school athletics. Ohio High School Athletic Association Assistant Commissioner Bob Goldring says there's still a special school and community camaraderie associated with state championships. Kentucky High School Athletic Association Commissioner Brigid DeVries says the caliber of play at state finals has "dramatically increased" in the past 15 years.

Yet students such as Sycamore volleyball player Brittani Gray say club sports give her rare venues to test her skills. Her family spent \$6,400 last year on her volleyball efforts, including play on a Mizuno Cincy Classics Junior Olympic team. As a team member, the senior received instruction from an Olympic coach and went to 11 tournaments from Baltimore to Las Vegas. Because of her volleyball achievements, Northwestern University coaches gave her an athletic scholarship.

Brittani's father, Michael Gray, wouldn't be surprised if some day club sports constituted the "main" season and high school sports were the "off season."

"If high school sports aren't careful," he says, "they're going to disappear."

Does all the extra expense, and all the extra training, make a difference?

Some coaches and parents say kids are improving at all sports - whether it's from more training or smarter instruction. But since *most* athletes are improving, the expensive extras have become a requirement for competition, they say.

Still, coaches say no amount of costly training can substitute for talent - and hours and hours of practice.

"It's not how tall you are or how high you can jump. It comes down to time spent on a sport," Xavier golf coach Doug Steiner says.

Northern Kentucky University women's basketball coach Nancy Winstel says as long as a kid is playing, and playing right, it'll show. She says playing on an AAU team might help make a player better, and she has seen a big improvement in basketball skill over the past decade. But spending big bucks won't make stars out of everyone, she says.

"If they can't dribble without losing the ball or if they can't get in a defensive stance to save their lives, it's probably not going to happen for them," Winstel says.

Carrie Taylor isn't so sure all the playing is a good idea. The Mount Saint Joseph men's and women's soccer coach credits the growth of soccer clubs for improving players' skills, but she also is seeing more parental pressure on kids to excel. She says that results in overuse injuries and burnout.

Thomas More College athletic director and men's basketball coach Terry Connor rarely sees high school kids playing pick-up basketball at parks and playgrounds anymore. He suspects they're stuck in gyms being overcoached and overworked in their overscheduled lives.

"Kids are getting quicker and they're more athletic, but I don't know if they're better basketball players," Connor says. "Are they better shooters? I couldn't say that they are."

Jeffrey Davis, father of Winton Woods senior three-sport athlete Jason, says an athlete is limited without talent, and talent is one thing in sports that's not for sale.

"Some kids aren't blessed with natural ability," Jeffrey Davis says. "And some parents are trying to buy it."

An athlete's reality

This, the kids say, is the reality of their lives:

At some point every year they're emotionally exhausted and physically spent because of sports, academic demands and an attempt to maintain social lives.

Nobody wants to quit his or her sport. They keep playing because they love the game, they want to be with friends, they want to improve, they want to win state, they're aiming for a scholarship. They're afraid to disappoint their parents. And besides, nobody's imposing limits on their volume of play.

Fairfield three-sport athlete CJ Link says someday she would love enough free time to "just take a nap." She's a rare athlete who plays club ball or pursues extra training in soccer, basketball *and* softball. Last year she played 148 games; her family spent \$7,000 in the process.

When she thinks about college, she imagines an existence devoid of sports.

"I've done all this stuff my whole life," CJ says. "It seems like I never have enough time to try other things."

Seton volleyball player Chelsea Graman says club and school sacrifices were worth the end result - a scholarship to Villanova - even though she missed a family reunion, a family vacation, her cousin's wedding and the school father-daughter dance (twice) throughout the years.

Kings tennis player Matt Allare literally missed home. He was gone nine of 12 weeks during the summer and competed in eight tournaments from West Virginia to Louisiana.

"It was fun going new places, but there were times I was homesick because I couldn't sleep in my bed or see my friends and animals," Allare says. "I'd like to have a week off every three weeks. That would be good."

Randy Bradberry has traveled the country with his son Tony, a Lakota West wrestler who was in 21 tournaments last year. The Bradberrys spent \$9,660 on such things as travel, camps and equipment.

Recently, father and son pondered the question: Is it all just too much?

"Would you rather quit, and me give you \$10,000 a year?" Randy asked.

Tony shrugged.

"No," he said. "What would I do with my time?"

Foreign Fields: Business As Usual

By Simon Tanton

PHOENIX, AZ (Nov, 20, 2005) USSoccerPlayers - A funny thing happened this weekend. The big three in the Premiership all played on a Saturday. And? for the first time in eons, they all won. They now occupy three of the top four places in the Premiership and the table has a much more familiar look to it. Watching Arsenal dismantle plucky little Wigan and Chelsea squeeze past an injury-decimated Newcastle wasn't so surprising. No, the big surprise of the weekend was the performance of Manchester United in the post-Keanegate era. For the first time in many moons, United looked rather good.

Indeed, Roy Keane's departure from Old Trafford may turn out to be the best thing that has happened to the club for a couple of years. There's no doubting that, at his peak, he was as influential a player to ever grace the Premiership. He was a box-to-box midfielder player, whose like are seldom seen in the modern game. He could inspire his team to victory by grabbing games by the scruff of the neck and not allowing them to lose. His performance in Turin in the 1999 Champions League semifinal springs to mind when he rallied his troops from 2-0 down to beat Juventus 3-2, securing United's place in the final. Yet at the same time, his booking in that game that kept him out of the final.

Welcome to the other side of Roy Keane. The ultra-competitive nature of his game often boiled over, and it's impossible to talk about Keane the footballer without mentioning his alter ego. Manchester United are not the team they were in 1999. We all know that. Ferguson has built a new side. Because of his loyalty to his skipper, it's one that is built to accommodate an aging midfielder who really is not the same player.

It's all very well Keane spouting off to all and sundry how sub-standard his team-mates are, but watching United dismantle Charlton at the Valley in their first game without him on the roster, you had to be impressed by their performance. How ironic it was that Alan Smith - the man touted as Keane's replacement - should open the scoring.

With a simple 4-4-2 formation that didn't need tinkering to accommodate Keane, United's pace and movement up front was much more in sync with the United of old. Wayne Rooney showed he was capable of inspiring his teammates, not by shouting at them, but by taking hold of the game the way Keane used too. If that proves the new standard for Rooney, United probably won't miss the Irishman as much as many fans seem to think.

In many ways the loss of Keane on paper looks a big gap to fill. He was the epitome of the Manchester United of old. He inspired the youngsters of that side. He was the heart and soul of that team. But that team is gone. Long gone. And Keane was probably the last player to realize that.

He wanted United to be the United of old and it hurt him that they weren't. Since Chelsea's appearance on the scene, the Premiership really is a different ball game these days. Long gone are the days of a two horse race for the title between United and Arsenal. Even Patrick Vieira, Keane's nemesis has left the League behind.

For United to accommodate a player of Keane's age who doesn't have the legs to do what he did has been a hindrance to the side. Of that there is no doubt.

There will never be another Roy Keane. We know that. While I'm sure Fergie would have loved to see his Roy make good again, in reality it wasn't going to happen. It wasn't only the sub-standard performances on the pitch from Keane that weren't doing him any favours, his rantings to the press were really showing him up to be much more than just a player on the downside of his career.

How can teammates look to him for inspiration if he spends his spare-time berating their performances? If he was turning in inspired showings week after week and being let down by his teammates? well then, fair enough. But he was as sub-standard as the rest of them. He was dragging them down. They looked to him for inspiration and it never came. Hence the lackluster state of the entire side. Now that they can't look to Keane to rally them, it is those players themselves who will have to raise their game.

Look what happened to Everton last season without Rooney. They had an incredible season. Once you know Rooney isn't an outlet, it's up to you to ensure your weekly levels of performance are much higher than before. Ditto United now. Without Keane in the side, it's up to the players themselves to play at a higher standard each week. Which is exactly what they did at the Valley on Saturday.

Great players are great players, but you only have to look at the Philadelphia Eagles and Terrell Owens to know that sometimes greatness comes with baggage. I wouldn't say Keane was as bad as Owens in terms of the added downside he brings, but the Eagles had no hesitation in cutting the player who was widely touted as the final piece in the puzzle.

In Keane's case, he was one of the first pieces of the puzzle. Now in 2005 he just doesn't fit anymore. What makes more sense? Take that one piece of the puzzle and start over? Or discard that one piece entirely and move on. I'm not saying United will win the League, but I fully believe that second place isn't beyond them now.

And in this Chelski era that's probably about as good as it gets.

Simon Tanton was the first to hit the century mark as a contributor with the original Round not Oval. He covers all things Southampton for SoccerNet.

Ex-Metros coach to guide Chivas USA

 [E-mail](#)  [Print](#)

Monday, November 21, 2005

By IVES GALARCEP
HERALD NEWS

When Bob Bradley was fired as coach of the MetroStars almost two months ago, there was a prevailing belief that the winningest coach in Major League Soccer history would not stay unemployed for very long.

He didn't.

The Herald News has learned that Chivas USA, the expansion club that set a league record for futility last season, has hired Bradley as head coach, signing him to a multi-year deal that will keep him as the highest paid coach in MLS.

Bradley, the MLS career leader in coaching victories with 136, will replace Hans Westerhoff, who took over as the Chivas USA's interim head coach after the club fired Thomas Rongen mid-way through the regular season. Bradley spent three seasons as coach of the MetroStars, compiling a record of 32-31-26 during that span. Bradley guided the Metros to the playoffs in each of his first two seasons with the team, but failed to record a playoff victory on either occasion.

Metros president Alexi Lalas fired Bradley with three games left in the 2005 regular season, replacing him with assistant Mo Johnston, who eventually became the full-time head coach after helping guide to the Metros to the playoffs.

Chivas USA is hoping Bradley can straighten out a club that posted a 4-22-6 mark in 2005, the worst record in the 10-year history of the league. Bradley has coached eight seasons in MLS and has never had a team he has coached miss the MLS playoffs. Bradley has some experience with expansion teams, having guided the Chicago Fire to an MLS Cup title in its inaugural season in 1998.

Section 8- Youth Sports Health Issues

Sleep apnea can cause strokes, according to study

Chances of attack or death can double with the condition

Robert Tomsho

Wall Street Journal

Nov. 13, 2005 12:00 AM

Searching for the causes of deadly strokes, medical researchers say they have identified a culprit in the bedroom: sleep apnea.

The disorder, often undiagnosed for years, causes sleeping people to temporarily stop breathing. A number of studies have found links between sleep apnea and serious cardiovascular disease. But it wasn't clear whether sleep apnea actually led to strokes.

Now a Yale University study published in this week's *New England Journal of Medicine* singles out the condition as a cause of strokes. The study, which involved 1,022 patients over the age of 50, found that the most common form, so-called obstructive sleep apnea, more than doubles the chances of a stroke or death. The Yale study also found that severe cases of obstructive sleep apnea can more than triple the risk of stroke or death.

H. Klar Yaggi, the study's principal investigator and a sleep-medicine specialist at the Yale University School of Medicine, says the higher incidence of stroke and death remained even after researchers adjusted for other traditional stroke-risk factors such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

The results bolster other recent findings, including a study by University of Toronto researchers earlier this year indicating that patients with severe sleep apnea were as many as four times as likely to suffer strokes. Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States after heart disease and cancer, striking 700,000 people a year and killing 163,000 of them.

Often undiagnosed

An estimated one in five American adults suffers from at least mild forms of sleep apnea, although physicians generally say treatment isn't necessary unless it involves five or more pauses in breathing per hour of sleep, along with other symptoms such as daytime drowsiness. Roughly 4 percent of adult American men and 2 percent of women suffer from the disorder to that degree, according to a study at the University of Wisconsin. But some researchers estimate that more than half of these cases go undiagnosed.

With obstructive sleep apnea, the lungs continue to work but the muscles in the throat become so relaxed that the airway becomes all or partially closed. With central sleep apnea, a far rarer form, the body temporarily stops making any effort to breathe.

Common symptoms include loud snoring, choking or gasping during sleep and daytime drowsiness, although the apnea episodes often fail to actually wake the sufferers. The disease often strikes those who have hypertension or are overweight.

A 2003 study of 300 National Football League players found that 14 percent of them had sleep apnea, and the disease is believed to have played a role in the sudden death in 2004 of former Green Bay Packer great Reggie White.

Sleep apnea is also associated with diabetes, hypertension and driving accidents, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Treatments include a mask-like device that is worn over the nose and mouth during sleep. The device is attached to a pump that pushes air through the mask to keep the upper air passage open.

Consequences for strokes

One big question raised by the Yale study, however, is whether treating sleep apnea will reduce the incidence of strokes.

All 1,022 patients involved in the study had been referred to the Yale Center for Sleep Medicine for various sleep problems. Of them, 697 were diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea and 325 had other disorders. Researchers followed up on patient outcomes for an average of about three years after the initial diagnosis.

Of the 88 incidences of strokes or death subsequently recorded, 72 occurred among the sleep-apnea patients. Many of these patients were undergoing various forms of treatment, including the pump-and-mask apparatus known as continuous positive airway pressure, or CPAP.

But even with treatment, the group still had an elevated risk of stroke and death, according to the study, which was paid for by grants from the NIH, the Department of Veterans Affairs and Yale.

To some in the sleep-medicine field, that points the way to the next generation of related research.

"Now what we need to know is that treating that sleep apnea decreases the stroke risk substantially," says Virend Somers, a cardiologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., who wasn't involved with the Yale study. "We don't have an absolute cast-iron, randomized study to show that."

A separate study in the New England Journal of Medicine, by researchers at the University of Toronto, found that CPAP therapy didn't improve the survival rates of patients suffering from both central sleep apnea and heart failure.

Treatment brings relief

Some patients do report finding relief from treatment. John Thompson, a 52-year-old former chef from New Haven, Conn., said his heavy snoring woke his wife up for years.

He didn't know he had obstructive sleep apnea until a little over a year ago, when the cardiologist who was treating him for chest pains sent him to the Yale Center for Sleep Medicine for an assessment. There, doctors monitored his sleeping with cameras and electronic sensors attached to various parts of his body.

These days, Mr. Thompson, who wasn't part of the Yale study, sleeps wearing a CPAP device and says he is better rested and has more energy.

"Now I can walk further," he says. "At one point, I couldn't walk two feet."

Some researchers advise people to seek a doctor's help if their sleep partners notice that they stop breathing repeatedly during the

night.

For those who live alone, symptoms to watch for include difficulty concentrating, mood swings and falling asleep at inappropriate times during the day. Another strategy: Turn on a tape recorder at night and listen to how you breathe while sleeping.

"The public-health message here is that we need to continue to work on timely diagnosis and timely initiation of treatment of people with symptomatic sleep apnea," says Carl Hunt, director of the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research, part of the NIH that helped pay for the Yale study.