

HOW TO LINK PRACTICE TO GAMEDAY

To enhance players' learning and experience, it's important that gameday echos training as much as possible. Here are a few ideas for how you can link them together.

BUILD IN YOUR TRAINING FOCUS

The game provides the perfect platform for players to showcase what they've been working on. So, make the most of this opportunity. Base your game around what you've focused on in training and set outcomes that link to what they've been practising.

STICK WITH YOUR COACHING BEHAVIOURS

Gameday can be intense and hectic. But it's important not to lose yourself even if things aren't going well. Your personality is a big link from training to matchday.

Think about how you behave in training. How often do you speak? What tone of voice do you use? What type of intervention methods do you use and when? Do you value positivity?

Imagine a coach who is calm, positive and gives players a chance to figure things out in training. But when matchday is here, they change. They become stressed, loud and commanding. There's no consistency in their approach here. That will confuse their team, add pressure, and remove their fun.

So, don't throw your values and behaviours out the window. Be the same fun and positive coach, whether you're at training or gameday.

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PROVIDE A SIMILAR ROUTINE

Another way to link training to matchday is by using the warm-up as an extra opportunity to practice. Using the same warm-ups or practices you'd use in training provides your players with a similar routine. And it's much better preparation than everyone lining up to take turns to shoot at the keeper.

USE TEAM TALKS

Team talks provide a great opportunity to link training to matchday. You may already do this before the game. Providing little bits of information about what you've been working on recently and setting some outcomes that relate to that. But it's something to keep in mind for half-time, too.

Depending on how the game is going, there may be a lot to consider at the break. But don't lose track of your original focus for the match.

While your players have the chance to settle down and have a drink, think about your messages carefully. As mentioned in this article, don't overload your team with loads of information at half-time. But, based on what you've observed, find a positive way to link back to training and the day's objectives. It might simply be praising them for showcasing some of what they've practised in training, then encouraging them to see if they can try it more often in the second half.

Having your team talks near the players' parents and carers can be beneficial, too. Letting them hear what's being said will help to get them on board. Plus, it will increase their understanding of what you're looking for and how your training sessions link to the game.