



NEWS

COMMENT

LEARNING

FROM THE SIDELINES



**“Do not follow where the path may lead.
Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”**



WHAT NEXT?

On the 8th May 2008, Barcelona president Joan Laporta announced that Josep (Pep) Guardiola would succeed Frank Rijkaard as the first team manager. He signed his contract in June 2008 and less than twelve months later in his first season as manager, Barcelona won the treble of La Liga, Copa del Rey and the Champions League. Can he go onto be a consistent winner, only time will tell but for now Guardiola as to comes to terms with being the most successful ever first year manager at the highest level.

Guardiola is no stranger to success as a defensive midfielder for the Catalan side he won the European Cup, European Cup Winner Cup, La Liga, Copa del Rey and represented Spain. At age 38 he has the potential for many years of top flight management.

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

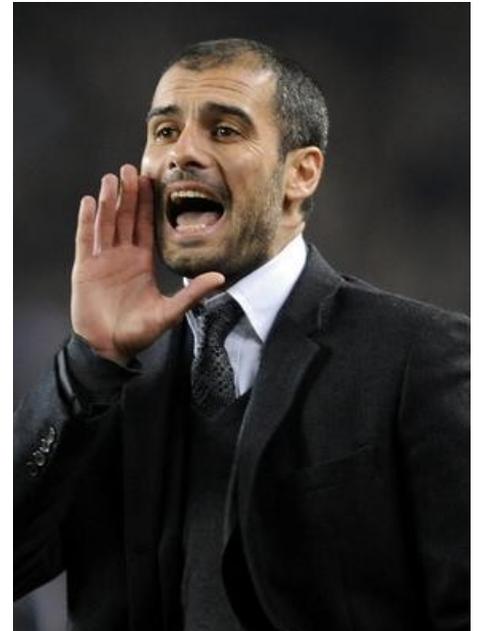
The offspring of doctors often become doctors, likewise the offspring of lawyers often become lawyers and so it continues. Teachers frequently have family members that have previously been involved in the profession, so it is not really a surprise that many coaches have followed in family footsteps. Darren Ferguson son of Sir Alex (Manchester United) recently lead his team Peterborough United to their second consecutive promotion taking the side into the Championship.

NOBODY MAKES IT ALONE

One of the most difficult concepts in the World of sport to explain is that although nothing takes the place of talent and personal commitment, they still need the support of others. In our culture we often live by the maxim that "If it is to be it's up to me".

Parents often make personal sacrifices so that their budding athlete has every opportunity to pursue their dream. On page 2 is a story that I have often relayed to athletes that have become too engrossed in how much they are working to develop their skills at the exclusion of recognising the support of others.

Behind every great athlete is a support group, be that family members, coaching staff, technicians, mentor or spouse. Often their contribution is unseen by the general public but we can be assured that without it the athlete would not be the performer that they have become as it is clear that NO ONE MAKES IT ALONE.



JOSEP (PEP) GUARDIOLA

D.O.B: 18.01.71

PLACE: Santpedor

HEIGHT: 1.80

HONOURS AS A PLAYER

European Cup: 1

European Cup Winners Cup: 1

La Liga: 6

Copa del Rey: 2

Caps: 47



ALBRECHT DRUER

The year is 1471, the place a tiny village near Nuremberg, and there lived a family with 18 children. Two of the Druer children had a dream of pursuing their talent for art, but they knew full well that their father would never be financially able to send either of them to Nuremberg to study at the academy. After many long discussions the two boys finally worked out a pact: they would toss a coin and the loser would go into the nearby mines and with his earnings support his brother while he attended the academy for a period of four years. Then they would swap places with the first brother supporting the other with sales of his artwork or, if necessary by taking his place in the mines.

Albrecht Druer won the toss and went off to Nuremberg to study while Albert went down into the dangerous mines and, for the next four years, financed his brother, whose work at the academy was almost an immediate sensation. By the time Albrecht graduated he was earning considerable fees for his commissioned works.

When the young artist returned to his village, the Druer family held a festive dinner to celebrate Albrecht's homecoming. Albrecht rose from his honored position at the head of the table to drink a toast to his beloved brother for the years of sacrifice that had enabled him to fulfill his ambition. His closing words were, "And now, Albert, blessed brother of mine, now it is your turn, now you can go to Nuremberg to pursue your dream, and I will take care of you."

Albert sat with tears streaming down his pale face, shaking his head from side to side while he sobbed and repeated, over and over, "No ...no ...no ...no." Finally, Albert rose and said softly, "No, brother I cannot go to Nuremberg. It is too late for me. Look what four years in the mines have done to my hands! The bones in every finger have been smashed at least once, and lately I have been suffering from arthritis so badly in my right hand that I cannot even hold a glass to return your toast, much less make delicate lines on parchment or canvas with a pen or a brush. No, brother ... for me it is too late."

One day, to pay homage to Albert for all that he had sacrificed, Albrecht Druer painstakingly drew his brother's abused hands with palms together and thin fingers stretched skyward. He called his powerful drawing simply "Hands," but the entire World almost immediately opened their hearts to his great masterpiece and renamed his tribute of love "The Praying Hands."

Let it be a reminder, that no one - no one - - ever makes it alone!



ALBRECHT DRUER

Born: 21.05.1471

Place: Nuremberg

Died: 06.04.1528

Painter, Printmaker and Theorist

One of the first European landscape artists to paint in watercolour

Exerted a huge influence on the artists of succeeding generations, especially in printmaking

Four books on Human Proportion and four books on Measurement



GO THE EXTRA MILE

It's the little things that matter. All coaches have heard or used the phrase, "go the extra mile" and there is no doubt that we trust our athletes to do just that, after all it is the athlete that is usually the one that says "tell me what to do coach and I will give it 100%".

Often the best intention starts with 100% commitment both on the part of the athlete and the coach but over time, be that months, weeks or even days, the resolve to go the extra mile gradually gets eroded. It starts with skipping one exercise or drill and then before we know, the dream escapes just as sand runs through our fingers.

I remember reading about the Statue of Liberty and sculptor Auguste Bartholdi. The statue was dedicated on October 28 1886 and located on Liberty Island in New York City. "Lady Liberty" symbolises liberty, freedom and republicanism, standing 305 feet above sea level it is an iconic symbol of the free World.

There are two other Lady Liberty statues which were created as models for the main statue, one which can be found in Paris and the other in the north east of Brasil.

The steel framed, copper body was painstakingly created in Bartholdi's Paris workshop. Liberty's head was the first part to be completed in 1878 and it was soon clear that attention to detail was a mark of the sculptors work.

Every hair had been painstakingly created and yet it was unlikely that anyone other than a few construction workers would ever see the top of liberty's head. You see there were no aeroplanes in 1886 and as far as most people knew there was not likely to be a flying machine: the Wright brothers did not even get their first plane off the ground until 1903.

It is clear that Bartholdi had a culture of signing his work with quality and did not try to take the short cut. The vast majority of athletes put the work in to achieve their goals, "the hard yards" as the Americans like to call it and yet there are some who look for every short cut, hoping that they can cut some of the effort required.

The beauty about achievement is that when reaching a goal we can look back on the journey with satisfaction, learn lessons along the way that make us stronger and wiser and be justifiably proud of our perserverence.



STATUE OF LIBERTY

Officially title "Liberty Enlightening the World"

Stands: 46m

Platform: 47m

Total 93m above sea level

Created by: Auguste Bartholdi

Completed: 1886

Total Weight: 204 metric tonnes

Length of hand: 5m



GIVE ATHLETES THE CREDIT THAT THEY DESERVE

In the March 09 issue of The Slant there was an article titled, IS EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGY CHANGING SPORT TO THE POINT WHERE RECORDS ARE MEANINGLESS? I would argue that technical improvement through athlete development has a far greater effect than technology.

Swimming has seen an evolution in the styles that the top swimmers adopt and in a recent article in Swimming World by David Guthrie states "Race footage from the Sydney Olympics already looks like a nostalgic, by-gone era. Technique has evolved so rapidly that comparing races from Sydney and Beijing almost looks like two different sports. The two most prominent recent technical innovations are the "straight-arm recovery" for sprint freestyle and "underwater dolphin kick." Together, these developments are nothing short of revolutionary in their effect on swimming training and performance".

Golf is always exposed to new styles of swings, committed runners will be well aware of the POSE technique for running and alpine skiers have evolved with the carving technique while ski jumpers adopt the V technique. Normally most new methods start with elite athletes, are refined and then filtered down to participants but there is a key issue, elite athletes tend to be considerably stronger than participants.

We should give credit to elite athletes as it is now normal to expect only first class physical condition from those that are looking to gain that winning edge. Perhaps the biggest single development in sport has been the integration of strength and core conditioning programmes?

THE MONGOOSE

Designed expressly for Twenty20 cricket, a new type of cricket bat has been created just for this style of play, the blade is 33% shorter, a handle 43% longer than a normal bat and has been declared within the laws by the MCC. The bat was first used when Derbyshire beat Durham.

It is expected that the bat will be used further in Twenty20 World Cup, but it's success will only be seen in the future, as like other sports cricket has had many "weird" innovations from Dennis Lillee's aluminum bat to Gray Nicolls' two-faced design. The Mongoose is designed to take the weight from the shoulders of the bat and added to the toe, while incorporating it in the handle rather than the blade, making for a larger sweet spot. For long standing cricket followers individuals may remember the shoulder-less blade used by Lance Cairns in the 1980s, known as the "Excalibur".



ICC World Twenty20

First tournament:

2007

Number of teams:

12

Current champion:

India

Leading run scorer:

Matthew Hayden(265)

Leading wicket taker:

Umar Gul



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