

There's no doubt the ever-evolving world of technology has made life a great deal easier for sports coaches.

Technology, and its impact, has become part and parcel of the modern sporting scene but how that technology is being put to use is also becoming an increasingly important component.

A disciple of the SportsCode range of products for the last eight years, Perth Glory head coach Ron Smith has mastered the effectiveness of the software. The rewards are priceless – being able to extract the precise information he needs for his coaching duties in minimal time.



“SportsCode is only limited by your own imagination” Smith said.

“It’s so flexible you can do anything you want with it and that’s the thing that I like about it. It really is a dream when it comes to software.”

“It’s not difficult to use at all and I’ve found that I’ve spent seven years coming up with defining a way of coding stuff so that I get exactly what I want but if I wanted to find anything else afterwards I could still go back into it and find just about anything I wanted.”

“I can code a game live and film it and get all of that information pretty much in one take. The key to being able to code a lot of information is to be able to

do it in one go.”

In that respect, Smith has refined the way he does his coding during matches which has resulted in saving a lot of man hours while still being able to glean the same information.

He changed his strategy from grabbing segments of games to focus on coding the whole team and going through the game in one hit. That covered all his bases at the same time, for less time in the long run.

“Grabbing segments became ineffective because I had to go in afterwards and extend or reduce each incident” he said. “The issue then became the amount of time that you spent actually going through it and over it to amend all of the information.”

“I’m more interested in the strategic side of the game rather than how many times someone touches the ball or who they kick it too. I’m more concerned about how effective the team is once they’ve got possession or where did they win it and how good are they at transferring the ball from one end of the field to the other once they’ve got possession. That tells you where you need to focus your coaching attention on the team.”

“Little things like that mean you can be very selective. With the Elite system you can activate the different teams during a match and go from one team to the other but still keep coding and it just relates to whichever team has possession.”

The multifunctional nature of the software, which offers a broad range of options, means there is a degree of trial and error for coaches while they sift through exactly just what sort of information they want from it.

“You just make a start somewhere but the beauty of capturing a whole game is that the nature of the software whichever way you use it will give you a statistical analysis” he said.

“It will give a count of everything coded throughout

the match. You get extra information to what you actually set out to find.”

“It’s a fantastic piece of software. I’ve seen other sorts of coding systems that cost an awful lot of money to use and I just question why people would spend huge sums of money on something that SportsCode can give you just about immediately, like straight after a game.”



Prior to the last year where has been based at Perth Glory, Smith spent two years working for the Football Federation of Australia (FFA) helping preparing the national team for their World Cup final campaign. Smith had his first contact with SportsCode in 1999 when working in Malaysia and was attracted by the system’s potential.

Initially, he used it purely to look at football in his role of running education programmes for coaches at the elite level.

“I could see that the software would give me an opportunity to look closely at games and be able to edit out examples of different things and have them in a presentable form for educational purposes” he said.

Smith then became involved in doing some research into goal-scoring patterns and finished up doing a detailed study of three premier league teams over a three-year period. “Coding football matches was something that was an interest at the beginning but became almost an obsession, to the point where I still do an awful lot purely out of interest but more specifically have the things relate to the performance of my team and the teams we are going to play” he said.

“I’ve now devised a coding system which is pretty sophisticated and allows me to do almost anything that I might like to think of. I can find anything that I want from a game within a matter of minutes.”

Ron has mastered the balancing act between coaching and analysis. As head coach, head analyst and much more at his role in Perth Glory, Ron has come up with methods to make sure he codes a game quickly and accurately so he get on with the task of analyzing his teams and oppositions performance.

Ron’s Coding tips:

- Code everything in one sweep.
- Manually toggle on/off code buttons to reduce the amount of post game editing.
- Code team performance as opposed to individual instances.
- Use Hot Keys.
- Predict where the play is going and get ready to click the button before it happens.
- Always code in ‘Attack’ mode. This will allow you to do your attack and defense plays as well as your opposition attack and defense plays.
- Allow athletes the opportunity to analyze or code their own performance – this will save you time and will get them to take a close look at their own performance.