

### *Sports Technology at Middlesbrough Football Club*

The motivation to introduce this programme came from the Academy Manager, David Parnaby, who had seen a presentation at an Academy Managers' meeting. All the staff were present at a demonstration in our Academy and were enthused by the possibilities opened up by such a system.

The quality of the use is dependent upon the quality of the filming at matches and it is advisable to get as good a vantage point as possible to film games. Using a Mac system it is possible to record direct to the computer but it can be better to record to disc for ease of use and portability and, by networking a number of lap tops, it is possible to have a number of trainees using the same source material to observe and record from.

Trainees have found the system easy to use and once a "culture of use" is generated it is not unusual to see the trainees working alone to tabulate and record their own DVDs. An unforeseen spin off has been the "working with others" aspect of the system as often the trainees help each other and co-operate in recordings and it does generate interaction and dialogue. Despite initial apprehensions we may have had of a "glued to the screen" syndrome, naturally there is some of this but quality interaction does take place. The use of Gamebreaker has ensured high quality production of evidence for the players' NVQ Level 3 in Sporting Excellence.

The real bonus of this system is that it generates discussion between Coaches and players and what you have is a focussed and concentrated view of one player's play, depending of course on how wide he has set his parameters. The discussion is based on what went on in the game and does not rely on recall but evidence. It can generate quality discussion between Coach and player and not only with one Coach, the player can access any of the coaching

staff to discuss and advise on performance.

Other advantages of the system are that the player has a live record of his playing performance which he can take home to enjoy or reflect on or share with his parents. The Coach has a record that he can refer back to, of not only the whole game but also of individual player performances which will help him in player assessment and of course team performance.

It can help with Coach education in that Coaches can record and study their own performance in coaching sessions, this could help them review their communication and organisational skills and to assess objectively session content and effectiveness and again can give rise to seeking advice or opinion from other Coaching staff in order to improve performance.

Having installed the gamebreaker system on 8 lap tops we are now working towards the idea of employing IT support in an attempt to enhance us further.



**Middlesbrough Football Club**

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