

'SCHOOL OF SCIENCE' IN ITALY

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Toffees On Tour _ Florence

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Everton's Head of Performance Analysis is with the team in Italy.

James Smith is based at Bellefield but his contribution to the pre-season preparation takes him wherever David Moyes and his squad go.

"We are planning to film and analyse the training sessions," James said.

"The players will start to play small-sided games this week so we'll have a close look at them and see how they are getting on."

Moyes himself is a huge supporter of sports science and James revealed that the Everton boss was ahead of his time during his previous job.

"He was actually one of the pioneers of performance analysis," said James. "When he was at Preston North End I believe that they were the only non-Premiership club to have Prozone."

There are two technical systems that Everton's analysis team use - Prozone and Sportscode.

James explained the difference between the two:

"Prozone gives you a lot of detail, a lot of very in-depth information but it's not in real-time. They analyse the information for us and send back the information within 24 hours of a game finishing.

"Sportscode allows us to code the games ourselves as they are being played enabling us to feed data and stats to the staff at half-time."

The analytical review of data from training and from football matches is still a relatively new concept but James added that it's improving at a rapid pace.

"Five years ago, performance analysis didn't exist and there was very little sports science within the game but now it's just growing all the time," he said.

"There are certain clubs, like Everton, who really buy into it and use everything we can to get every ounce out of the players."