



## **Ulster Coaching and Games Development Symposium**

**Slieve Russell Hotel – Ballyconnell, Co Cavan  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December 2003**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

### **Aim:**

*The conference was aimed at bringing the coaches and administrators together to promote debate and discussion on areas of common interest and to allow action points to evolve to move GAA in Ulster ahead.*

### **Keynote Presentation 1**

**Dr. Niall Moyna  
Exercise Physiologist Dublin City University**

**Presentation will be available on the web**

- Too much competition
  - Too much training
  - Having a medical impact on young players
- Questions over some statements in the Long Term Athlete Model
  - No closed season for some players
  - Impact of no closed season has yet to be realised

### **Keynote Presentation 2**

**Pauric Duffy  
Chairman of National Coaching and Games Development Committee**

- The GAA Model for player development outlined
- The problems that have evolved as a result of the Conference re administration and communication
- Moving forward together the administrators and coaches must work together

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December**  
**9.00AM**

The workshops had four distinct strands that were to focus on the following:

- A. Coaching and Games Administration
- B. Hurling Development
- C. Football Grassroots Development
- D. Development and Elite Squads

Presentations were made by Michael McGeehin, Mark Conway, John Morrison and Dinny Cahill and these provided the forum for debate and discussion. The workshop feedback is outlined here:

## **Workshop Feedback**

### **Innovation and Change in County Boards**

Initiating Change to sustain development

Facilitator: Mr Danny Murphy

#### **Our Aim is to:**

- 1...Co - ordinated Structures
- 2... Consistent County Structures
3. Involve Youth in Process
- 4... Stronger links with Education
- 5... Manage the system
- 6.6.Networking through County Officers and other bodies

#### **Key Issues**

- 1... Establishing a Gaelic Identity in the Schools
- 2... Providing opportunity to participate in Gaelic Games in schools for everyone
- 3... Recreational opportunity to play Gaelic Games
- 4... Sport for all before competition
- 5... One game per week for adult members
- 6... A new mindset encompassing Urban as important
- 7... Accommodating the salaried and voluntary workers

#### **Key Actions and by whom**

- 1... Fixtures Plan - County, Club and Education & including training schedules. Top Down control. (Curb team managers)
- 2... Increase the participation - FUN
- 3...Finance - Business Management.

- 4... Urban / Rural divide
- 5... Change in family structures & lifestyles - Health / Education
- 6... Youth in involvement
- 7... Amateur - need to protect
- 8... Administration - professional approach
- 9.. Coaching Structure - Strategic - for all
- 10.. Links formally between Clubs & Schools

## Workshop Feedback

### County Based Squads

### Evaluating the Development Structures

Facilitator: Mr Anthony Harkin

#### **Our Aim is to:**

- 1...Have a system for Optimising Player Development, ie. Tactically, Technically, Physically, Lifestyle etc...
- 2...Have a Structured Feeder System flowing from Dev Squad to Dev Squad.
- 3...Produce good Senior Players.
- 4...Lock Players into Long Term Player Pathway-including Player and Club in process.
- 5.Introduce Players to Good Practice

#### **Key Issues**

- 1...Club Co-operation
- 2...Quality of Managers/Coaches
- 3...County Board & Croke Pk Financial Support
- 4...Player Drop-out
- 5...Lack of Communication
- 6...Locking Coaches into system
- 7...Coaches Centres of Excellence
- 8...Talent Identification Criteria
- 9...Parents Involvement
- 10.Plan in place with a Co-ordinator

#### **Key Actions ,by whom and when**

- |                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1...Overall Plan    | Co.Board, Coaching Committee          |
| 2...Fixtures Plan   | Divisional Boards, Fixtures Committee |
| 3...Coach Education | Coaching Officer                      |
| 4...Plan            | Coaches                               |
| 5...Meet with Club  | Coaches Coaching Committee            |
| 6...Development     | Coaches                               |

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 7...Finance              | Finance Committee |
| 8...Work with Schools    | Club Coaches      |
| 9...Evaluation Programme | County Coaches    |

## Workshop Feedback

### FIRST STEPS

Building the Correct base for future players and stars

Facilitator: Mr Philip Kerr

Aims [We want to.....]:

- 1...improve fitness through ABCs
- 2.develop strategy guidelines to cover school and club [mini-games / blitzes]
- 3....determine the amount and frequency of games
- 4.close the gap between administrators and coaches

Problems [We must.....]

- 1...give time within the curriculum
- 2...get access to organisations and influence them
- 3....address the issue of dual and county players
- 4.change the attitude that everything is fine..

Actions [we will.....]:

- 1...educate teachers / parents /boards
- 1...develop proper club/school links
- 2.set a calendar of events and adhere to it
- 3...run tailor-made county symposium

## Workshop Feedback

### Next Steps

Developing a Way Forward for Hurling

Facilitator: Mr Tommy Lismore

Our Aim is to:

- 1.Maximise Participation
- 2.Maximise Optimum Playing Standards
- 3.Help Schools especially Primary
- 4.Coaching Academy for Coaches
- 5.Twin with Strong County
- 6.FUN

Key Issues

- 1.Right People for Right Job
- 2.Strategy for individual counties
- 3.Quality Coaching with Quality Coaches
- 4.Fixtures Plans accommodate equally both hurling and football
- 5.Greater subsidies for hurling development

Key Actions, by whom and by when

1. Implement Strategy - County Boards
2. Continuity - strict adherence of fixtures plans for hurling at the hurling time of the year by the County Boards and Ulster Council
4. Hurling GPOs assisted by clubs to go into primary schools with Quality Coaching on Basic Skills
5. Underage schools hurling finals - played before large crowds to increase profile
6. Ulster School of Excellence based on Joe Cooney Model

## Summary Session - HOW DO YOU SPELL CHANGE?

Dr Eugene Young

It is necessary to review how we do things at Provincial and County level and to assess how effective and efficient we are. If changes are required then it is necessary to make the leap.

### **CHANGE Make the Leap!**

If we do not at least consider making changes for the better then we will not have at least explored what the potential is if this change were to be implemented

**The GOLDFISH didn't know  
about water  
until he jumped out of  
the tank**

As coaches we are being challenged to think outside the box. In addition as administrators we should again be challenged to think outside the tank.

### **THINK OUTSIDE THE TANK**

Treat each obstacle as a challenge that has to be overcome.

**SUCCESS?**  
**OBSTACLES MAKE IT DIFFICULT?**

In Ulster the main enemy to success is complacency

## **COMPLACENCY**

In this centenary year we can review 100 years of change. The next 100 years will see more change. We can move with it or show lack of progress over the next ten years.

## **CHANGE IS INEVITABLE** **Progress is Optional**

We all fear change because it brings with it uncertainty. Where there is uncertainty we stick to the status quo, or what we know. You the people in this room are the *Change Agents* who can influence change.

## **HOW DO WE SPELL CHANGE?**



Go back to the Counties and review and look to come up to speed with the issues addressed in the workshops. Every little counts as we move forward and inch at a time

## **AN INCH AT A TIME AND THEN ALL THOSE INCHES MAKE A MILE**

At County level the micro level build capacity and enhance knowledge base, support coaches and work together to bring GAA in your county forward.

### **Micro Level**

- Build Capacity
- Enhance coaching knowledge
- Provide opportunities
- Support Coaches
- Avoid burnout
- Work together
- Work Smarter

Review the Seven S's as outlined by Mark and identify where you are strong and not so strong. Build on the strengths but also tackle the weaknesses, build the weakness into a strength.

#### SEVEN S

- Strategy
- Systems
- Structure
- Skills
- Style
- Shared Values
- Staff

As High Performance Director my role is to work with all counties and I have been trying to do this. Making changes with the coaches about coaching has been much easier than with Administrators.

"One can feel that one is making a difference at a micro level. The problem of macro change and influence is the greatest challenge and it is certainly the most difficult.

To usefully effect such change, the media (County Boards) and politicians (County Officials) must be morally and ethically committed to seeking the truth (moving forward), even if it isn't good for the ratings. This unfortunately may be a bit of a dream

•Ric Charlesworth 2001, p54 - The Coach Managing for Success

It is time to move forward in Ulster together. To achieve success the Administrators need to support quality coaching and the coaches and administrators must have the vision to achieve success.

## QUALITY REQUIRES SUPPORT AND VISION

Dr Eugene Young  
High Performance Director

