

# Horst Wein

GRATIS  
E-BOOK

## The **10** Most Important Conditions to Develop Creative Potential within Each Child



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"Creativity is to meet your self, to experiment and explore new things, to transform, to remodel, to have fun, to travel into a world of dreams and to do new things with joy and pleasure, using your fantasy and imagination."

## REQUIREMENTS NEEDED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE CREATIVE FOOTBALL PLAYERS



Left picture: Horst Wein with  
Franz Beckenbauer and  
Angel Maria Villar Llona

Since we were born, we've been given the potential of being creative. We only differ in how well we exhibit this creativity and in the

areas in which each person is able to become creative. Most of us have been more creative as an infant than as an adolescent or adult, because there are more opportunities and possibilities to play at the pre-school stage than later on in school.

Therefore, in general, the development of the capacity to be creative and to become even more creative is not obstructed in kids up to 6 years old. This is considered as being normal.

Nevertheless, when the child starts school, the evolutionary process can cease. This is due, in many cases, to the negative effect of the teaching methods with intentional orientation and very strict norms. Suddenly, the available time to play is reduced and school frequently suffocates this development which was occurring naturally.

When playing Football children face the same problems in developing their creativity because of traditional coaching practices. Many of the methods that for decades have been essential components of the learning-teaching process in the Football world, are now-a-days obstacles that inhibit the expression of the creative potential within each child.

## The 10 Most Important Conditions To Develop Creative Potential Within Each Child

To overcome these important deficiencies, the following conditions have to be created to again see the growth and maturity of more creative players in our Football fields.

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"As today many private or governmental institutions or organizations are busy in occupying the free time of our children, the kids lose fantasy, imagination and creativity to do their own things, to do what their desires, expectations and needs demand".

# 1 DECLARE THE WAR AGAINST THE 11 VS. 11 GAME



The "11:11" game has for many years choked, like a cancer tumor, the vigorous development of young Football players. It should be replaced by another type of competition, which should be tailor-made for children less than 13 years old.

Games like Mini Football (3 vs.3 on 4 goals) for 8-9 years old, 5-a-side and 7-a-side Football (10 and 11 years old) and 8-a-side Football (12-13 years old between both regular penalty areas), offer the adequate frame (space and amount of players, ball size and weight) for the children to express their creativity and inspiration in a more healthy environment that does not contain the stress of the 11-a-side game with their adult-orientated rules (see the articles referring to the advantages of Mini Football, 5-a-side, 7-a-side and 8-a-side Football in comparison to the traditional Football game 11:11).

Frequently, the game 11 vs.11 is still used now-a-days as the preferred practice method for preparing the weekend match. It should be replaced by more attractive and from the learning point of view, more efficient simplified games which use fewer players.

In the “big game” on a regular field, the young player is generally condemned to become passive, participating very seldom in plays where he can exhibit his creative skills.

“The Football field has boundaries, but the possibility to be creative are boundless.”

(Dettmar Cramer)



## 2 MORE GAMES AND LESS ANALYTICAL EXERCISES



Practising should happen in a game context. Statements like: "You only learn to play Football by playing it" must be re-discovered and have to be considered in the planning of all training sessions in which drills are still dominant and excessive.

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Children should be exposed to more game plays (global method) and less practice with the analytical method. The practice should happen in the game.

### 3 LET THE KIDS PLAY



Let the kids play, without correcting them constantly. When playing it is not necessary for the young Football player to know exactly the specific learning purposes. Knowing the learning aims is always important for the coach but not for the player.

The player should frequently have the possibility to “play”, or “play just for fun, without necessarily having any specific learning as a main objective”. We should not forget that one essential part of the game is its unpredictability. This explains why the game is so fascinating for kids. As Buytendik said: “Each game starts with a movement, which consequence is not completely predictable and which therefore has an element of surprise”

We should give children the opportunity to explore and to discover through “playing”, to infect them with the creativity shown by their teammates and opponents and without having the coach interceding frequently. By correcting from the start we expose the young player to an intensive pressure. Being stressed is a contradiction to the development of creativity.



Friedrich Schiller states perfectly, with the following words, the vital meaning of playing games for the human being: "The human feels and behaves like a human when he plays"

"The talent develops in a repetitive confrontation of many players in a small limited field, whilst the regular Football field creates fatigue and limits the fantasy, creativity and burst of speed of the young players."

(Dante Panzieri)



## 4 PLAY IN ALL POSITIONS AND IN REDUCED SPACES

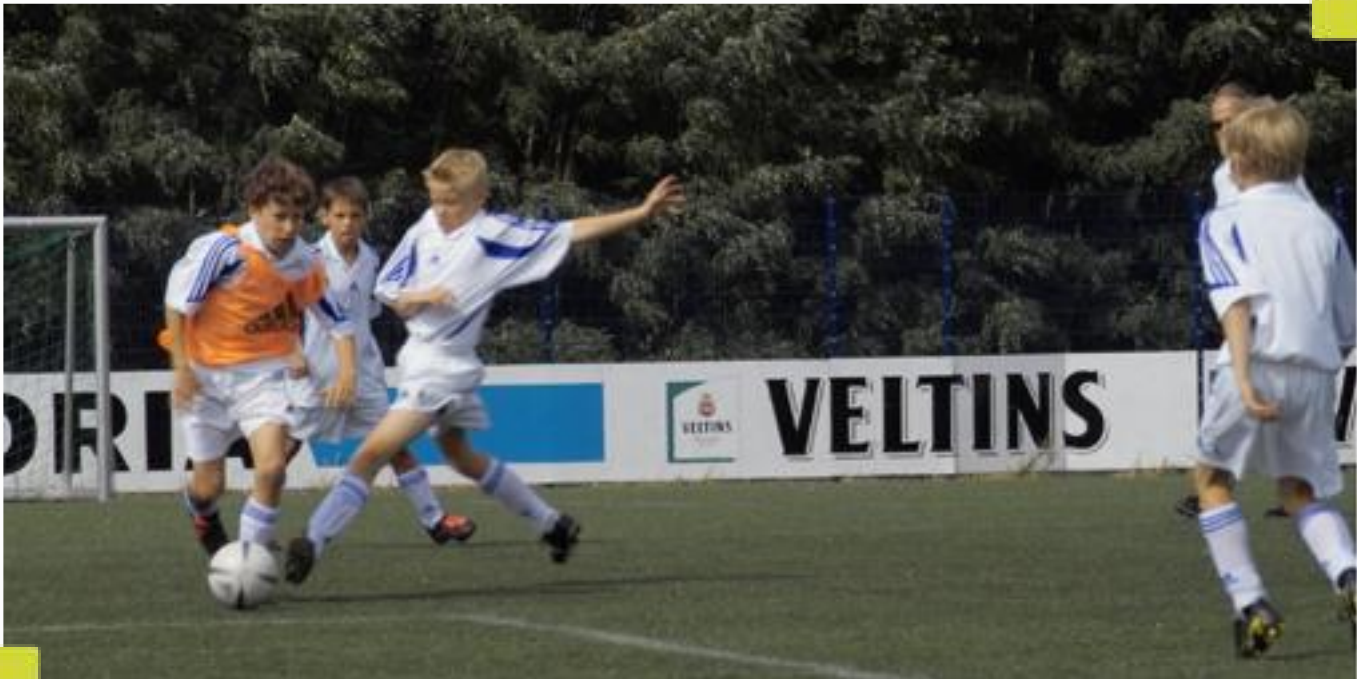


Young Football players up to 13 years “should have the opportunity to play in different positions in order to discover the roles and functions which these positions characterize”.

To experiment by playing in different positions stimulates the creativity. For example, the 8-9 years old players would perform the many variations of the Mini Football game (3 vs. 3 on 4 goals) instead of playing 7-a-side Football or 11:1. If those 10-11 years olds participate in the 7-a-side game instead of competing in the 11- a-side match and if the players of 12-13 years would play tournaments of 8-a-side Football instead of championships in 11vs.11, then the problem would be solved since a competition with less players in a reduced space stimulates the creativity. On the other hand, the full game in a regular Football field only tires the young player physically and intellectually, limiting his creative play.



## 5 YOU MUST ENJOY THE GAME TO BE CREATIVE



Each training session should include a great variety of games (and not only Football-specific ones"). When the children play, they should have fun and be keen on the game. If the young player does not identify himself with the proposed game that the coach has designed, the creative capability will remain asleep.

The more the players are enjoying the game and the ball, the more it stimulates the development of a creative way of interpreting the Football game by the young Football player.

Bohm and Peat (1988) maintain in "Science, Order and Creativity", page 255-256, that "the establishment of objectives and patterns of behavior as well as the obsession of efficiency produce a rigid knowledge which blocks the free flow of thinking and movements, both necessary to lead to a creative behavior of the player."

## 6 LET THE PLAYERS CREATE GAMES AND RULES



Let the players create their own games and rules. The coach should not only make sure that the objectives of a simplified game are mastered by most of his players, in accordance to his plan, but should frequently encourage the children to create different games through modifying the rules proposed by the teacher. Frequent rule changes, introduced by surprise during the practise of the game, force the players who want to win to adapt to the rule changes, using their creativity.

Several variations of Mini Football with 4 goals, played in a reduced space, are particularly effective in stimulating creativity in young players.

Also during the training session, from time to time, the coach should give his players (perhaps for 10 minutes) a space to play freely, to do what suits them best. This could be done in any part of the training session. Once the young players are familiar with the "generosity" of the coach, not only their imagination and fantasy will grow, but also their sense of responsibility, personal initiative and their daring to improvise and to be creative. This may also increase the possibility of creating a leader within the group of players.

## 7 DARE TO TAKE RISKS AND TO IMPROVISE



Dare to take risks and to improvise - without fearing the possible consequences. The young players must grow "with the ball". That means in the same way they are progressing physically and mentally in each stage of their development, also the size and the weight of the ball has to "grow" ( using balls n° 3 and 4 as well as balls of different materials and different characteristics in their bounce and flight behavior).

The young players, especially those of 7 to 12 years, should not be pressured by their coach to quickly pass the ball in order to allow a better team-play and winning. They should frequently have the opportunity to "be in love with the ball", to dare to improvise their play and take risks, without fearing the possible consequences of having committed a mistake or to have lost the possession of the ball. Unfortunately this no longer exists, because winning has become too important, even at the lowest levels!

Young players who " treat the ball as their best friend" and often do their own thing are frequently more creative than those who are coach-orientated and accept what the coach demands. To progress in their development of being more and more creative in



the Football game, children should exhibit a certain degree of independence from their coaches!

This is why young players should practise and play as often as possible without the presence of their coach (i.e. in the street, in the park, in the court yard etc.) because his absence allows them to feel more comfortable to explore their innate potential without the fear of getting criticized when making mistakes.

"Only those who attempt what they cannot do, will grow."

(Ralph Emerson)



## 8 TRAIN THE RIGHT HEMISPHERE OF THE BRAIN



Once young children enter school the left hemisphere of their brain, where logical thinking, calculation with numbers and the verbal expression are located, is mainly getting stimulated. Pupils are expected to solve the tasks (generally “closed”, perfectly defined tasks) along the lines indicated by the teacher without being allowed to contribute something of their own to the solution of the task or to be creative.

Nevertheless the development of the creative potential needs a systematic stimulation of the right hemisphere of the brain. That is why in school, like in Football training, more than ever “open” tasks are needed. These “open tasks” require young people to be creative to find the best solution to the given problem.

As long as the left hemisphere of the brain prevails in the scholastic classroom as well as in Football training, less creative players will arise in the world of Football.

Learning in Football, must be extended, more frequently offering the possibility to think and to learn incidentally and in divergent ways. The coach does not have to impose everything! It is not a doctor-patient relationship with set prescriptions.

Instead of the coach being the main character in the teaching and learning process, he should often transfer responsibility to his young pupils and ask them, through systematic questioning, to solve most of the situations that he presents. A true master in teaching never gives the answers to the problems, but helps his pupils to find and discover them on their own, guiding them to correct results. The game of Football itself must become the teacher and not the coach". Johann Wolfgang von Goethe says it with other words: "Our youth prefers to get stimulated rather than instructed".

The excessive instructions given by the coach as well as the acquisition of automated and coach-directed Football moves is not helping to develop the creativity of young Football players.

## 9 CREATIVE COACHES = CREATIVE PLAYERS



In order to see more creative players (with the capacity to be innovative and to do things in a completely different way from the norm) in the future on our Football fields, our coaches will have to rethink, among other things, about:

While practicing or competing, coaches should not always punish the mistakes of their players, as this will inhibit the players from taking risks and thereby stop their creativity, fantasy and imagination from flowing

In the training sessions more space or time should be offered to allow players to experiment new moves that occur to them spontaneously. A more informal environment - as seen when Football is played on the street, the beach or in a park- helps to develop more creative players.

Any flash of creative behavior in a player should be recognized by the coach who should do everything to encourage his players to be different and to look out for original solutions to the problems inherent in the Football game.

The coach should look for ways that allow for the accumulation of new experiences in young Football players so that these are not gained exclusively with the use of the analytical method, but whenever possible he should find a way to do it in a more attractive way through the application of the ' global' method.

The questions that normally a coach raises to help his players to find the solution, should from time to time be raised by the players themselves.



## 10 THE ENVIRONMENT AS AN ENEMY OF CREATIVITY



The environment of the young football player is an enemy of his creativity.

Nowadays most of our young talent grows in an atmosphere which is noticeably hostile towards creativity. Their familiar and scholastic surroundings, especially between the ages of 7 and 14 years, are characterized generally by a “intentional direction” of learning (with strict norms), which is limiting personal initiative, independence, originality and the value of trying to do things in different ways.

In most Football fields, the young players are dominated by instructors, who allow relatively little freedom of movement and decision-making to the young players whose opinions are practically not taken into account. For the coach it is important to always have everything under his control. When a player departs from his norms, he is often chastised and told to respect the coach’s directions.

“The creativity of his players is the source from which a coach should drink daily.”

Often instructions are given to the players about what to do and how to solve the problem or where he has to position himself best on the field. If during a competition, the coach does not direct his players, many parents may think that the coach is not motivated nor is qualified for his work.

In Football training as well in school too much instruction from outside does not favor the personal initiative of the players. Many coaches think for their players, instead of stimulating them to think for themselves.

Compliance has to have high-priority! If a player begins to show signals of autonomy and self awareness, he will receive a call from the coach to get in line. This way, over the years, the young Football player gets used to following the coaches' instructions and plays according to the information received but without putting in his own thoughts and his personal flair.

When these young players arrive at the age of 14-15 years, it is obvious that they are going to face serious problems if they are requested to make their own decisions, because for many years they have been trained to execute only what the adults have told them.

(At this age there is a massive drop-out of players, as demonstrated by a study conducted in Bavaria, Germany between 1978 to 1988.

The number of teams diminished during this decade by more than 50% when the players switched from category C (12-14 years of age) to category B (15 to 16 years of age).

That is to say, before they played in the category B more than half of the players dropped out (see “Kicker”- Sportmagazin, 05.11.1989).)



It is logical that suddenly it is very difficult for them to become more of a composer and creator instead of a simple executor, who for years have not been allowed to play in a creative way. Such players are not capable of enriching the Football game and their teams' performance with their creativity, fantasy and imagination.

"Instead of presenting fishes to the children, the students, or the players, the parents, teachers and Football coaches should teach them how to fish".





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