

Positive Coaching Seminar

Overview

The Pacers Committee hosted a Positive Coaching seminar on Wednesday 23rd June at the Mordialloc Sporting Club. This was a great event supported by our keynote speakers from the SBA – Dean Kinsman, Elite Program Manager and Vince Crivelli, Sabres Men's Coach (refer to appendix for their backgrounds). We had about 20 coaches in attendance including committee members and parents. Supper and light refreshments were also provided.



The night was hosted by Craig Davidson (VP / Boys Operations Manager). Craig opened the evening, and spoke about challenges faced by domestic coaches and our obligations to develop our youth in a positive manner. Topics covered included our Code of Conduct, providing players with fair court time and our responsibilities as mentors for young team members. This was followed by an absorbing 1.5 hour interactive session with Dean and

Vince. The topics ranged from training approaches, to skill development, player appraisal and developing players with varying skill levels.

Coaching Advice

A number of lessons and tips were drawn from the seminar that we thought would be useful to share with our club members:

- **Positive reinforcement** – Vince mentioned the 'hamburger principle' when appraising your players. In simple terms, this means making 3 feedback statements: start positive, followed by suggesting an improvement, and then finish on a positive note. That's a 2-1 ratio of positives to negatives.
- **Post-game feedback** – Vince also advised that making one positive statement to each player post-match was a great way to spark their interest in the next training session and game. Even if a player has not contributed to the scoreboard, their efforts on defence or passing assists are often the key to team success.
- **Setting small goals** – when faced with coaching a struggling team (new players / incorrect grading), Dean suggested setting small goals for the team. These goals can apply equally to both training and games. Ideas for small goals included: making an incremental improvement in fouls shots at training, or counting the number of rebounds your team achieves in a game. In this way, players can focus on having wins that are not related to the scoreboard as well as developing their game.



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- **Home practice** – it was acknowledged that many of our players may only practice at formal training sessions. However, there are ways to encourage home practice for skill development. Drills such as speed passing against a wall to develop the reflexes, or figure-eight dribbling between the legs, can be taught in a fun way - the secret to motivating additional practice.
- **Balancing skill development** – when asked about running drills with novice and advanced players, Dean suggested running the drills for a time limit rather than a set number of repetitions. In this way, the advanced players may conduct 20 repetitions rather than stop at a target of 10 repetitions while waiting for others to catch-up. Another suggestion was to instruct the advanced players to practice more with their weaker hand.
- **Code of conduct** – Vince suggested we all review the code of conduct on a regular basis and assess our compliance with its principles. As leaders of young players, our actions and behaviours are watched and absorbed by players, parents, referees and opposition teams. Remember also that we are playing in an amateur domestic context.
- **The importance of training** – both Dean and Vince suggested that the 45-mins training session is the one occasion where a coach can influence player development. In contrast, the game is often too fast and out of your control - you can't blow the whistle to correct a skill error. Hence, make the training sessions an effective learning experience as possible – this positions you well for games.
- **Setting boundaries** - Vince mentioned that young players want to know the boundaries, i.e. what a session will entail and what the players need to complete. This can be achieved by discussing the training plan and rules from the outset, so that expectations are effectively set. If players know that they will be rewarded by a match after they conduct their skills sessions correctly, then motivation levels will increase.
- **Skills, skills, skills** – a secret of sustaining longevity in the game is to develop skills at an early age. By setting the foundation at a young age, a coach will arm players with the basics necessary for making a confident contribution during games. Lack of confidence is one of the key reasons players back out at later stages of their playing career. So, rather than worrying too much about complex set plays, it is better for players to learn how to use both hands and react to game situations.

Seminar Conclusion

At the close of the seminar, Colin Sutherland (President) presented both Dean and Vince a bottle of wine. Note, we had previously 'paid out' on Dean for his South Australian background – multiple NBL championships with Adelaide 36ers – so we let him choose his preferred wine.

We also held a random prize draw for the coaches. Our lucky coach was Alison Page, who received a new coach's instruction board. The Page family are winning everything these days – including the Club Heritage Competition (Jason) and Mordialloc Sporting Club meal voucher, all in the one week.

We also received some great feedback from both Dean and Vince. They thought that our approach to running domestic basketball was very professional, mentioning our team selection policy, coaching DVD, polo shirts, code of conduct, induction guides and newsletter.



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Special thanks also to Leigh Farmer, our Competition Manager, for planning this seminar and organising our guest speakers. Also thanks to Caz Jenkins who did much of the leg-work in organising the facilities and prizes. Both Leigh and Caz have a passion for motivating our youth through positive reinforcement.

Where to Next?

As part of our coaching development initiatives, we also asked for permission to observe the Sabres coaches running their training drills, including Dean Kinsman's sessions. Both Dean and Vince were pleased to offer this to our club members – the only catch, training starts at 8:00am on Sunday morning (although there are later sessions.) We are also seeking feedback from the attendees on the format of the night and ideas for future seminars.

Appendix - Speaker's Biography

Dean Kinsman – Elite Program Manager

Dean Kinsman takes the position of Elite Program Manager on the High Performance Panel. Dean



comes to the Sabres with more than 20 years experience, most notably the Head Coach of the Women's program at the AIS for the past 4 years. Dean has also been the coach for the National Junior Women's team in their past two World Championship campaigns, and prior to this was the Assistant Coach for the Under 21 and Under 19 National teams.

Dean has also been involved in the National Intensive Training Centre Program (NITCP) for almost ten years. He has also been involved in other junior programs, such as the Under 20's State

Team, which he was Head Coach of for 8 years, Australian Junior Camps.

Prior to coaching, Dean also enjoyed a successful playing career, playing at a national level since Under 16's. Dean also played for the Adelaide 36ers in 1983 and 1984, and was also captain in 1984.

Vince Crivelli

Vince Crivelli is the Sabres Men Head Coach and has a long and illustrious career in basketball. Vince is also currently the General Manager with the Southern Basketball Association, and has been with SBA for 20 years. Vince has also worked as a Business Development Manager for Westpac and as a National Sales Manager for a publishing house.

Vince has enjoyed some great success in recent years in coaching. In 2005 he coached the Sabres Men to Big V Championship Premiers. From 2005 until 2008, he was also Assistant Coach to the Melbourne Tigers NBL team, and experienced 2 NBL Championships there. In 2008, Vince was also awarded Big V Championship Men's' Coach of the Year. Most recently, Vince coached the Sabres Men to fourth position in the SEABL South Conference in their inaugural season in the competition.