

FC Barcelona--How to Understand Our Style of Play



- 2015 NSCAA Coaches Convention
- Reproduced by: Ian Andrew Mork



Presented By: Joan Vila

FCB Director of Methodology

- The following slides/photos were presented by Joan Vila at the NSCAA Coaches Convention, January 2015
- My notes are following every slide and they are from the translator for Joan Vila during the presentation
- Enjoy!
- Visca Barca!!



1. FCB _ OUR HISTORY
2. FCB _ STRUCTURE OF SPORTS DEPARTMENT
3. FCB _ OUR METHODOLOGY
4. FCB _ OUR MODEL
5. FCB _ THE VALUES THAT HAVE GUIDED OUR WORK
6. FCB _ OUR PRIDE
7. FCB _ ... MÉS QUE UN CLUB



The following statements are the words of
FC Barcelona, Director of Methodology, Joan Vila:

Honored to share our knowledge and we want to start with a video
of our playing style

- Video shown of: The Manita (5-0) vs. Real Madrid
- Showing a history of the teams is important
- The history is important, because there have been several teams who have represented our model today

1. FCB_ OUR HISTORY... OUR COACHES



1944



1958



1971



1972



2008



2012



2013



1988



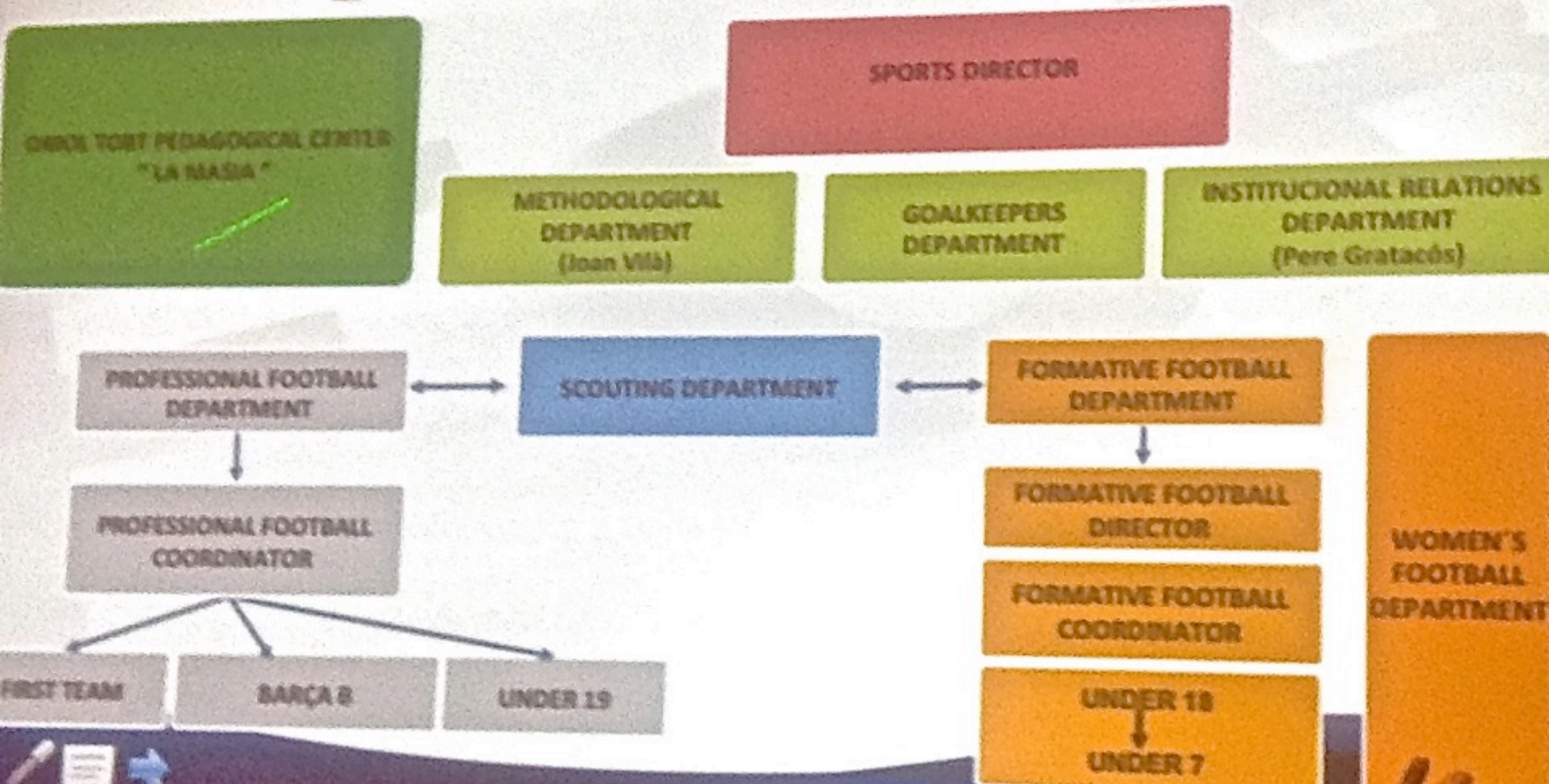
2014



Words of Joan Vila:

- First big change/moment was in 1971 when Rinus Michels arrived at the club
- 2nd big moment with Johan Cruyff—
 stressing having fun and enjoying playing
- 3rd great moment-Pep gathered all the experts
 and had the best moment in the history of the club
- We want to have a memory of Tito who continued this model
- Now we are trying to continue with the same model

2. FCB_ORGANIZATION CHART SPORTS AREA



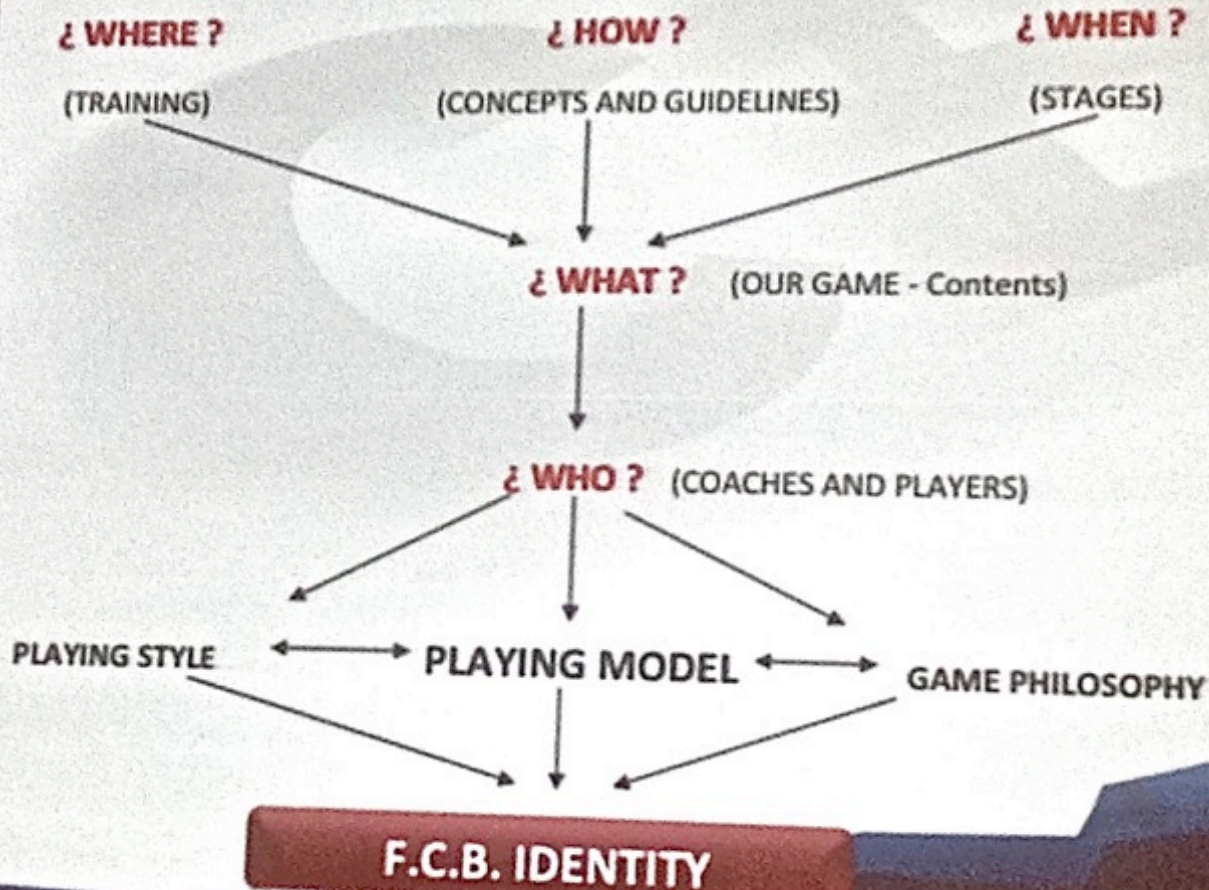


Words of Joan Vila:

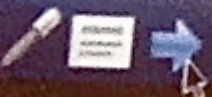
- This slide (previous page in this document) represents the sports organization of FCB



OUR FORMATIVE PROCESS



F.C.B. IDENTITY





Words of Joan Vila:

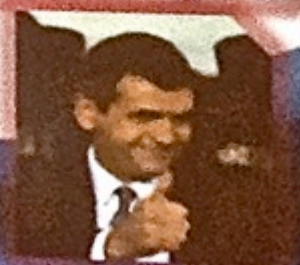
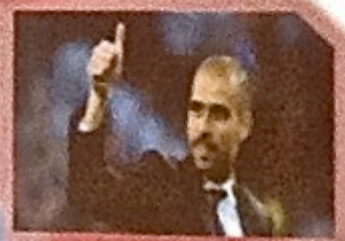
Methodology:

- Starts where?--training
- How?--concepts
- When?--stages
- To what?--our game
- Contents?--our ideas
- These concepts have to be developed by the coaches and players



➤ **WHY** do we want to do it ?

- Because the history of FCB demands it
- Because our members and supporters demand it and are grateful for it
- Because we strive for excellence
- Because we have a great tool to get the child and society: football
- Because we want to transcend and leave an imprint

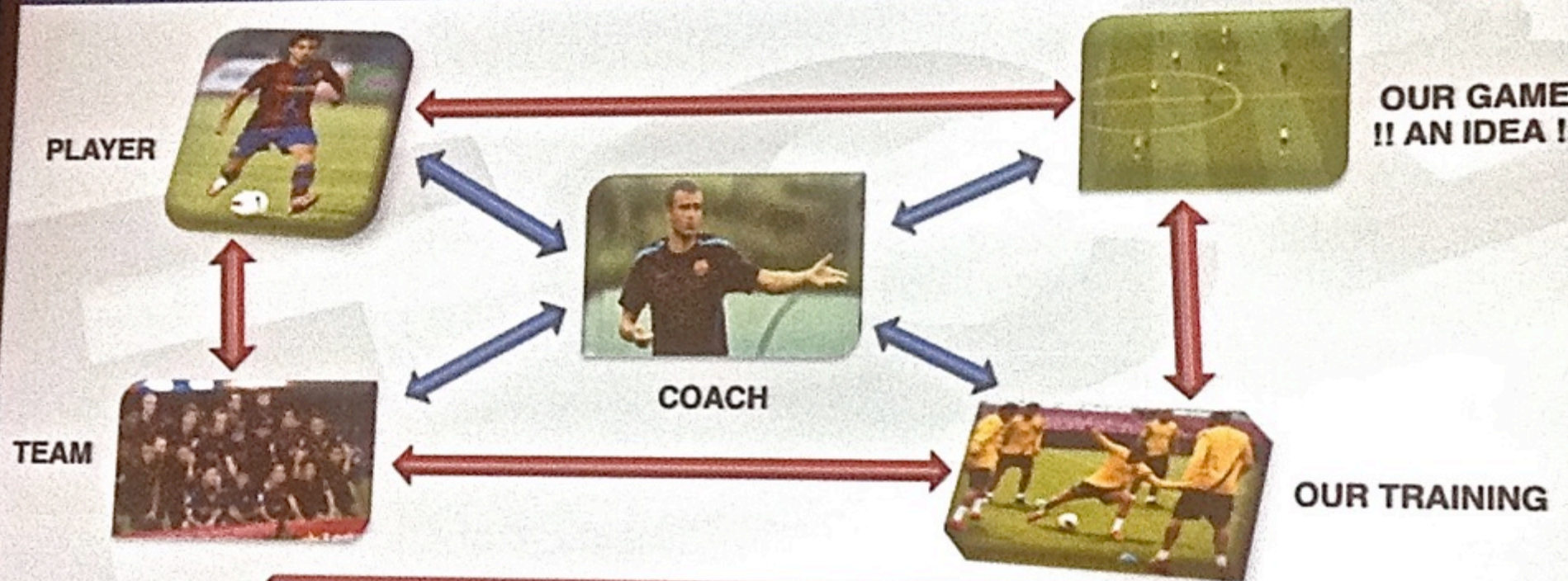




Words of Joan Vila:

- Game philosophy and playing style to create the FCB identity
- Must preserve our identity

FCB _ OUR WORKING METHODOLOGY_ Fundamental principles



We want to control the ball to : **PLAY AND ENJOY PLAYING**

We will only **OPTIMIZE** the player's performance if he/she enjoys playing
... and shares everything with THE TEAM



Words of Joan Vila:

Most important is to transmit our fundamental principles to develop:

- The player
- The team
- In the game
- In the trainings
- This is done by the coach



- We aim to develop the player
 - Player's talent
 - Game demands (specific training throughout stages of his development).
- Follow up on his understanding of our game
- This follow-up provide us with the best training conditions for his development



Words of Joan Vila:

- Fundamentals of play and to enjoy playing-brought by Johan Cruyff
- Players must enjoy our playing style and share with the team
- Design the best training conditions for the players to improve their understanding of the game

FCB _ METHODOLOGY _ Fundamental principles_ (1) PLAYER AND TEAM



- Integrate the players into the team without renouncing their talent
- Observe and control our game and current players

Messi	Pedro	Puyol	Piqué
Xavi	Busquets	Iniesta	Bartra

Draw conclusions

To achieve that all our teams have the same philosophy of play





Words of Joan Vila:

- Each player must integrate to help the team
- Aim to have all of our teams with the same identity and playing style



We understand players as complex systems

These **STRUCTURES** interact within the human being:

- ✓ *Bioenergy* structure (to live) (BIOE)
- ✓ *Physical* structure (PHY)
- ✓ *Technical* structure (TEC)
- ✓ *Tactical* structure (TAC)
- ✓ *Social-affective* structure (relationships) (SAF)
- ✓ *Emo-volitional* structure (emotions-will) (EVO)
- ✓ *Creative-expressive* structure (projection of one's personality) (CEX)
- ✓ *Mental* structure (where I want to go and what I want to be) (MEN)





Words of Joan Vila

- The player is a complex system-from different structures
- We want to improve the behavior of the players



1. INITIATION STAGE

- Initiation (1)..... Under 8 to under 10
- Initiation (2)..... Under 11 and under 12

2. SPECIALIZATION STAGE

- Specific formation Under 13 to under 15
- Specialization..... Under 16 and under 17

3. PERFORMANCE STAGE

- Performance Under 18 and Barça B
- High performance First team



Words of Joan Vila:

In our training process:

- Initiation phase-basic fundamentals for the player
- Specialization phase-most important-work on our model in the fundamentals per position
- Performance stage-still learn



FCB _ METHODOLOGY _ WORK ON THE STRUCTURES (INTERACTION)

The difference between Improving and **OPTIMIZING**

To improve: Do one thing better every time (it's a mistake)

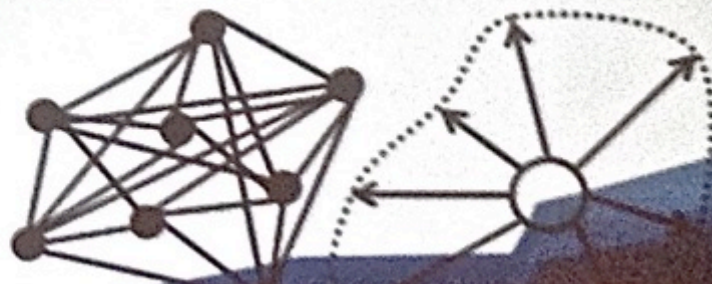
"To do the same, even if it's done better, is not always ideal" = **Limited scope**



TO OPTIMIZE:

➤ To improve the interconnections between all structures.

This way has no **limitations**





Words of Joan Vila:

- The difference between improving (limited scope) and optimizing
- To optimize is the most important
- We teach our coaches the playing style which is continuous
- We want to make our coaches passionate about our playing style



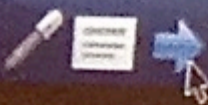
➤ Working with our coaches is to:

✓ Advise on the basics of the game and the FCB's

training methodology

✓ Continuous training to improve their preparation and their relationship with our players

✓ Make them passionate for our game !!





Words of Joan Vila:

- We teach our coaches the playing style which is continuous
- We want to make our coaches passionate about our playing style
- We advise our coaches-but we want coaches who really love the game and our playing style
- Not just like it, but love it!
- Analogy: many women in the room, but you only love one woman!
- Coaches receive continuous education



Working with our coaches consists of:

- Theoretical sessions
- Watching videos
- Analysis, discussion and consensus
- Reaffirm and develop concepts and methodology of our training
- Tracking of training and matches





TERMINOLOGY OF
OUR GAME



WE SPEAK OF ...

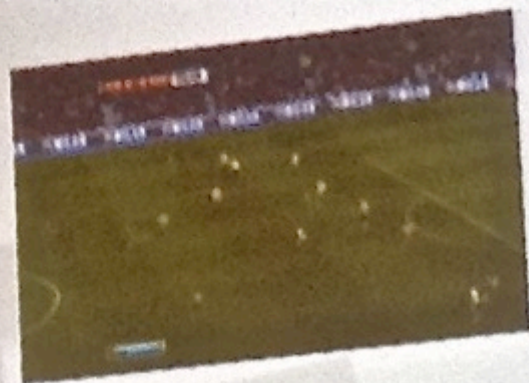
WE DON'T SPEAK OF

Optimize..	Improve
Phase possession	Attack
Phase recovery	Defend
Create	Destroy
Enjoy, learn, compete	Only win
Recover the ball	Steal the ball
To be better	Humiliate, belittle
Competitiveness	Aggressiveness
Empathy	Selfishness
Assertiveness	Passivity, aggressiveness
Adversary, opponent.....	Enemy

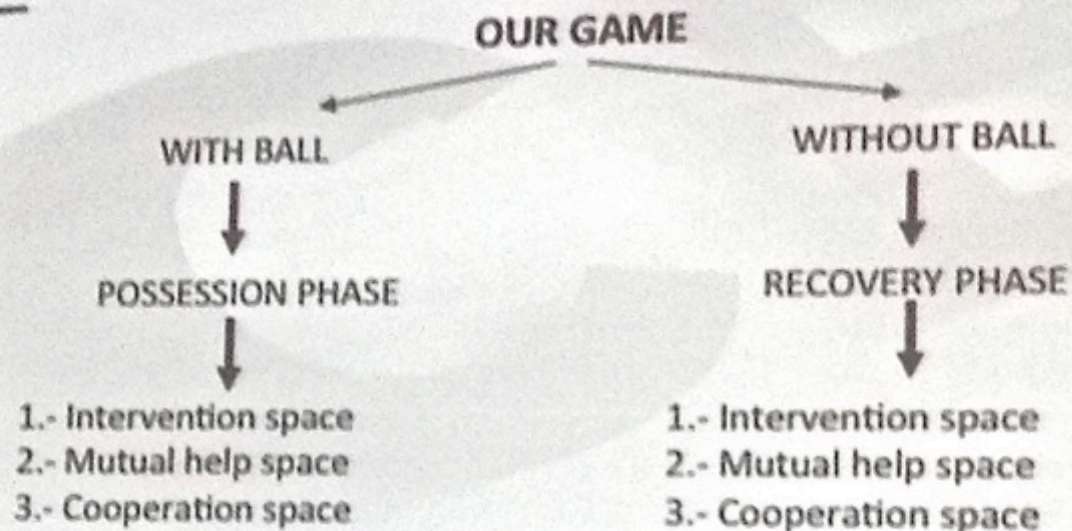


Words of Joan Vila:

- Terminology is important-this is action, our actions and where we want to go
- Usually vocabulary speaks basic, but we want our model to become greater, so we speak in a creative way



OUR GAME MODEL



- Our playing lines:

- ARE NOT lines but Phase spaces dimensioned
- YES passing lines or "Ways of communication"

THE MATCH



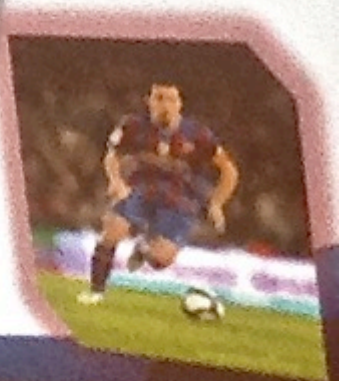
Words of Joan Vila:

- 2 moments in the game--no more
- We can influence our players based on how far they are from the ball and the recovery phase
- Based on their relationship with the ball -distance



1.- High individual and collective technical quality

- ✓ Constant contact with the ball since the initiation stage
- ✓ Work on coordination aspects (with and without the ball)
- ✓ Technical contents (¿what?) in each of the stages of the formation process (¿when?)
- ✓ Concepts and guidance (¿how?) for the improvement of all of the technical contents
- ✓ **¿Why?** Because historically our game has been associated to technical excellence, plasticity and spectacle





Words of Joan Vila:

1st fundamental:

Technical individual qualities

- Always with the ball
- Cognitive and coordination aspects-to develop technique
- They need these high qualities
- Plasticity
- Individual high quality technique integrated within the team



2.- Right distribution of players in the pitch

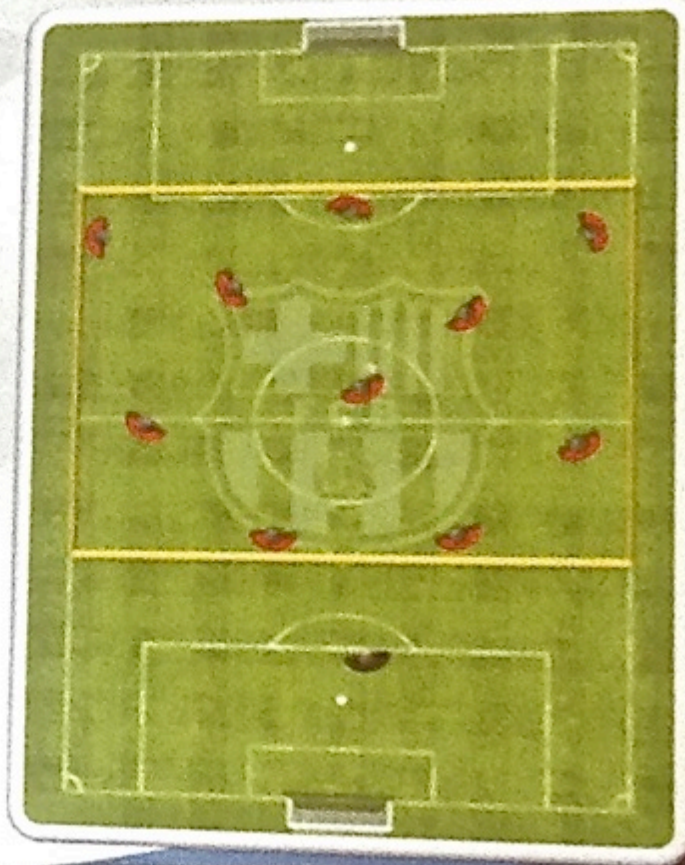
- ✓ Players don't lose their position in the pitch
- ✓ Defensive work by reducing *spaces*

“In recovery phase, always a step forward”

- ✓ Offensive work by making the pitch bigger

“In possession phase, always a step backwards”

- ✓ Forming triangles to attain:
 - Recovery phase: Better coverage and support
 - Possession phase: support and progression in the game
- ✓ Short distances between all players





Words of Joan Vila:

2nd Fundamental:

Right distribution of players in the pitch

- Recovery phase is always a step forward
- In possession-we always step backwards
- This makes us unique



FCB _ THREE P's (POSITION - POSSESSION - PRESSURE OR RECOVERY)

• **OUR GAME** is based in three fundamental concepts (**PPP**) :

- **POSITION** → Rational occupation of pitch
- **POSSESSION** → Sense ball protection
- **PRESSURE** → Immediate recovery of the ball after loss

• **POSITION** favors: { **POSSESSION** ball
 { **RECOVERY**..... ball ...

... that allows us ...

TO PLAY AND ENJOY



Words of Joan Vila:

Three P's key for our playing style:

1. Possession
2. Position
3. Pressure

- Main goal is to preserve our model and enjoy while playing



Words of Joan Vila:

Video shown:

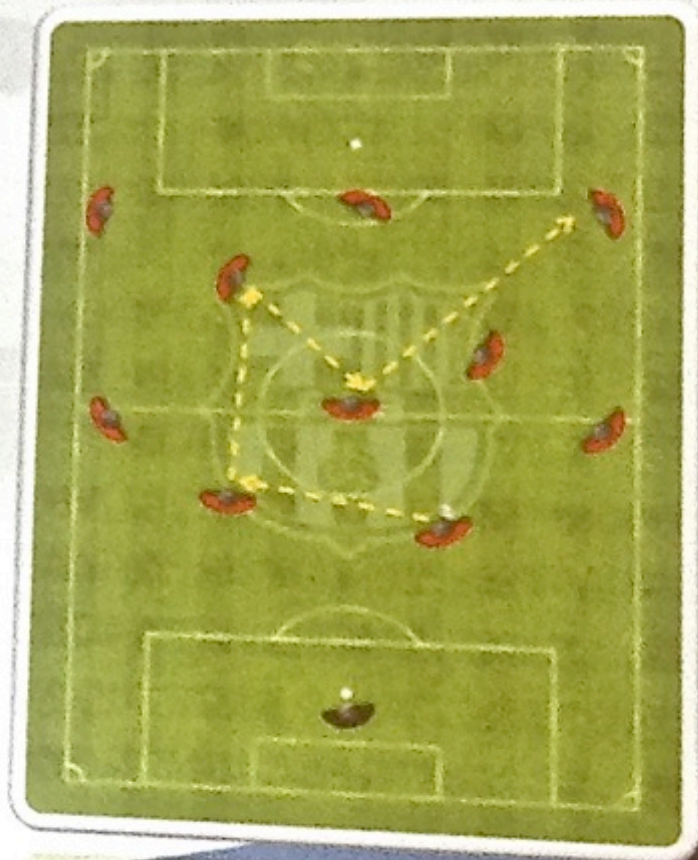
-represents the 3 P's

- good Possession, but if lose ball, able to recover fast, because of good Position
- lose the ball-step forward-apply Pressure and get the ball back



3.- A sense of protecting the ball

- ✓ **“The team that has the ball owns the game”**
- ✓ **The best defense is:**
 - 1.- **Do not lose the ball**
 - 2.- **Do not lose position**
- ✓ **Alternate short and long passes during the game**
 - a) **Too many short passes mean pressure from the opposing team and losing the ball**
 - b) **Too many long passes mean constantly losing the ball (less precision)**



FCB _ To play our best friend..... THE BALL





Words of Joan Vila:

3rd Fundamental:

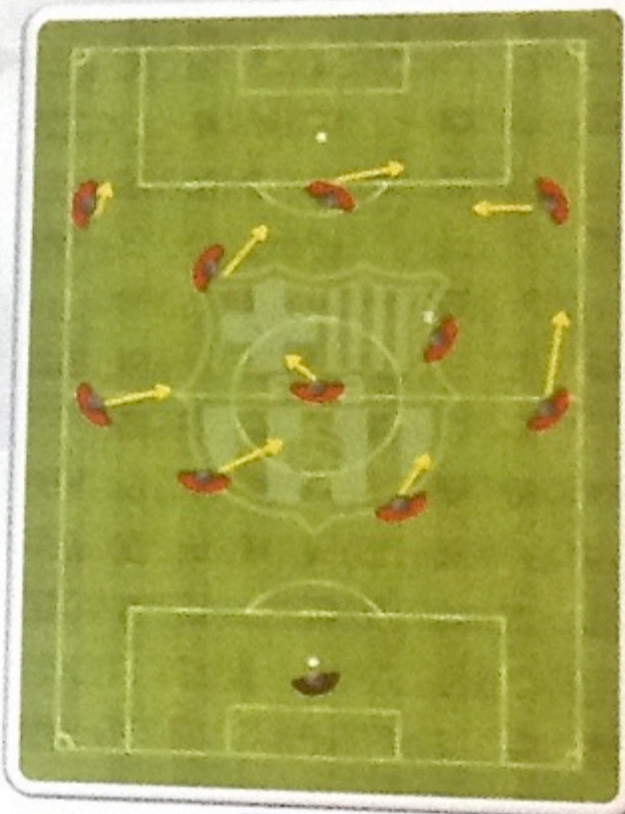
Protect the ball

- The ball is our best friend. Sense of protecting the ball
- To keep possession, to be the owners of the game



4.- Players' mobility without the ball

- ✓ Creation, owning and taking advantage of free spaces
- ✓ Objectives:
 1. Being able to receive the ball in the right conditions to play it
 2. Enable the teammate who has the ball to make the best decision
 3. Facilitate the team's joint tactical actions
 4. Difficult the opposing team's defensive actions
- ✓ Statistically our players run more than most opposing teams, however, for us:
“What's important is not running, but knowing how to run”





Words of Joan Vila:

4th Fundamental:

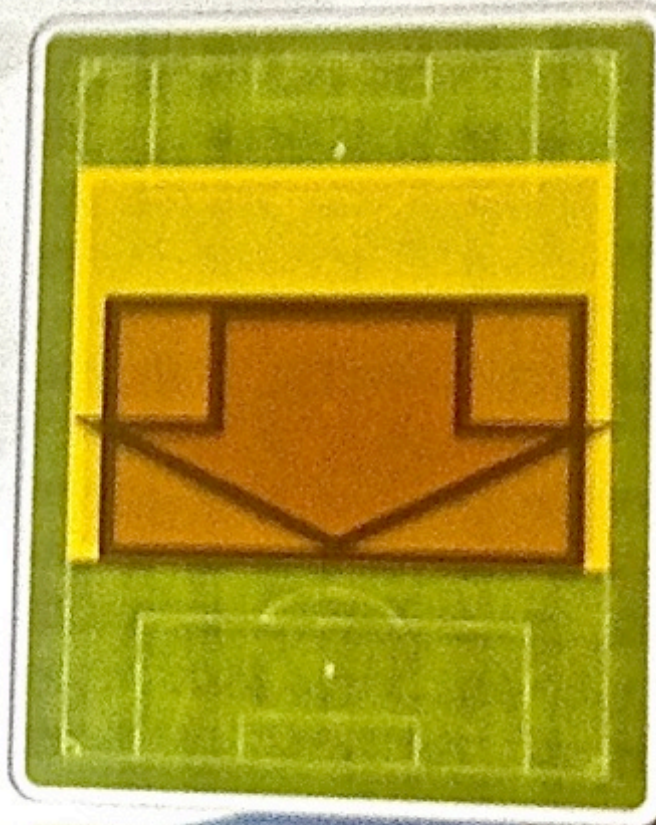
Players mobility without the ball

- Important players know how to run
- Don't run without a purpose-to receive the ball
- Give team options, make difficult for opponent



5.- Functional unity of players as a team

- ✓ With the ball the whole team... **plays and enjoys**
- ✓ Without the ball the whole team... **runs**
- ✓ Understanding team behavior as a higher order system than the sum of each players' work
- ✓ It is all an ongoing process, uninterrupted
(Continuum of complexity)





Words of Joan Vila:

5th Fundamental:

Unity of players as a team

- Correct positions brings functionality
- The interaction of the players makes this a complex system with a higher order of behavior



6.- Game's interpretation and comprehension !!!

➤ LEARNING HOW TO LOOK

- ✓ Perception and management of space
- ✓ Perception of time and rhythm of the game

➤ CHOOSING the best response in each situation

➤ The right EXECUTION

- ✓ Communication between the owner and receiver (of the ball)
- ✓ Concept of: before, during and after

Perception



Decision

Execution



Words of Joan Vila:

6th Fundamental:

Game's interpretation and comprehension

- Not just execution, but the interpretation and understanding of the game-their environment--improve perception ability-to make better decisions
- Then we evaluate the execution



● Learning **HOW TO LOOK**

- ✓ Profile, body orientation, head and eyes
- ✓ Width of visual field

● Learning to **PERCEIVE/DETECT STIMULUS**

- ✓ Near space (Space of mutual help)
- ✓ Far Space (Space of cooperation)

● Learning to **ANALYZE THESE STIMULUS**

- ✓ Stick the gaze and peripheral view
- ✓ Opening spaces and closing spaces
- ✓ Anticipate to the next action

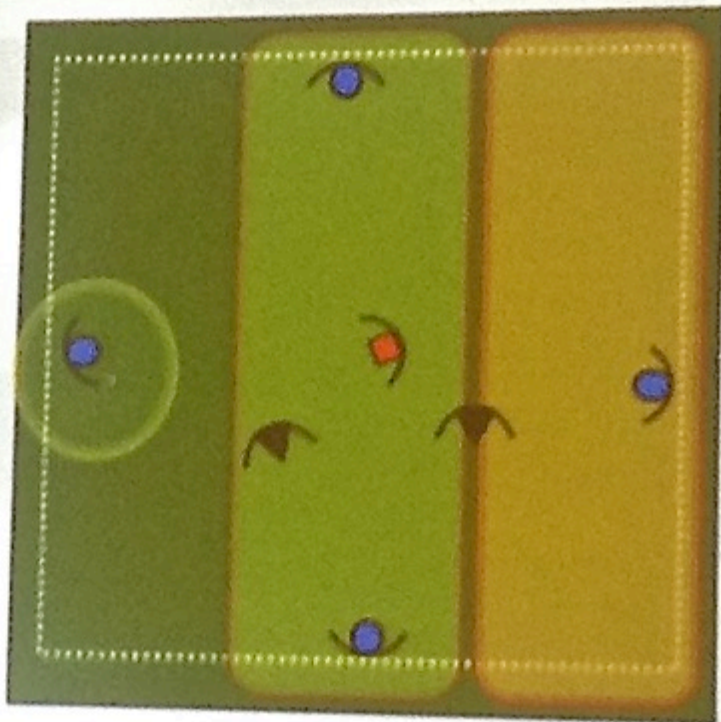
● Learning to **DECIDE**

- ✓ The best option for our team

● Learning to **EXECUTE BETTER**

- ✓ Communication through the ball between:

Possessor  Receptor



(4 + 1) c 2



Words of Joan Vila:

Important:

1st Learning how to look

- Then what to perceive
- Before, During and After-3 phases



Permanent **CONCENTRATION** on the game

In the possession phase there are 3 moments that players need to take into consideration:

Before receiving the ball

- ✓ Steps in this process:
look, perceive, analyze, anticipate and decide what to do

BE

In possession of the ball

- ✓ **Execute**: it goes from possessor to receptor
- ✓ Technical action that the player does with the ball

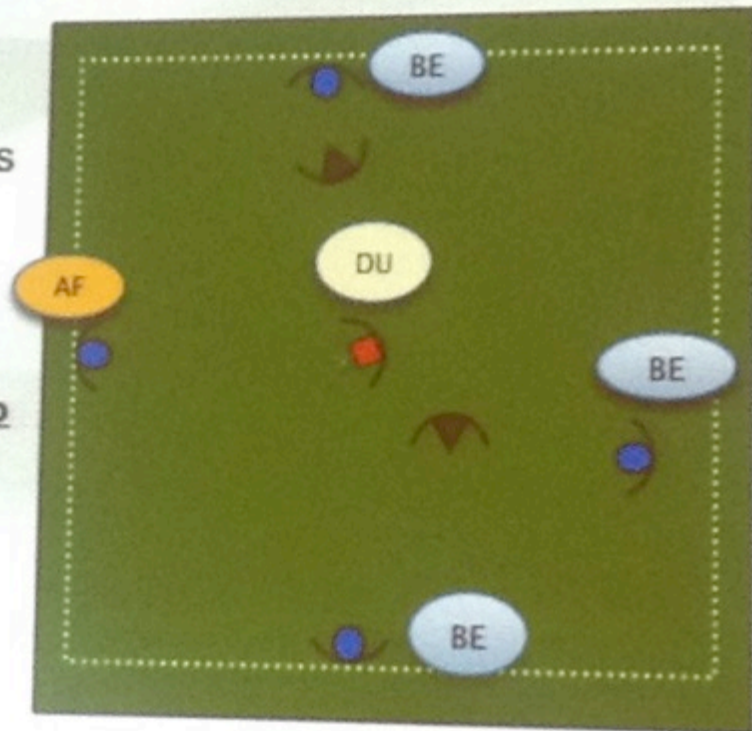
DU

After passing the ball

- ✓ **Mobility**: it goes from possessor to receptor

AF

"PASS & MOVE"



(4 + 1) c 2



Words of Joan Vila:

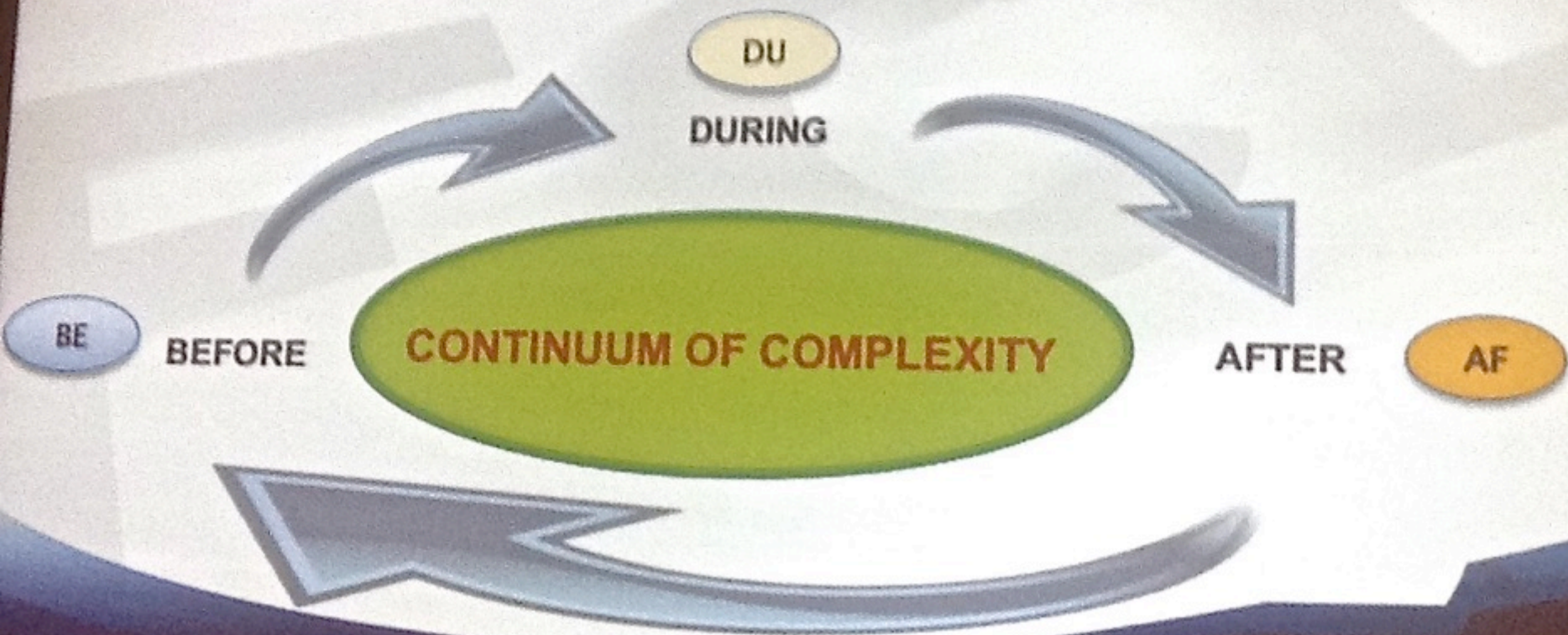
Video shown of Xavi:

In 90 minutes-he looked 804 times in one match

- 804 times!
- Most important to improve with the young players-Learning how to look
- The challenge is to see how your players are doing



● POSSESSION PHASE





Words of Joan Vila:

Must have concentration:

- Before, During (decide), After
- 3 phases always-football is very complex-so you must always Look and then Execute-pass and move-to make this process
- This is a continued process, you play with your feet and a big field



7.- Individual and collective participation

- ✓ **“The ball always run more than a player”**

- ✓ Pay special attention to: pass, control and dribbling
 - Precision
 - Speed of the execution
 - Rhythm of the ball as players grow (intensity, competition,...)





8.- Individual qualities at the service of the team

- ✓ **NO... selfish**
- ✓ **YES ... team spirit**
- ✓ **YES ... personal contribution to the team**

Example:

If the team works to make the goals a player, the player must know, cherish and contribute their efforts to this collective work.





Words of Joan Vila:

8th Fundamental:

Individual qualities

- At the service of the team
- An example is Puyol



- Training is the link between THE PLAYER and OUR GAME...
- Only through training (process) we will get OPTIMIZE player performance

THE PLAYER



OUR GAME





Words of Joan Vila:

Training is:

the link between the player and our game-our model



- ✓ Start with technical and coordinative exercises
- ✓ Technical improvement of player is essential for our style
- ✓ Bilateral work is very important
- ✓ We look for quality more than quantity





Words of Joan Vila:

Improve perception is always a goal

- Use 2 balls, etc.
- High quality technical players
- Keep the players constantly moving and passing (complex)

- Video: show 'finding the lines' exercise



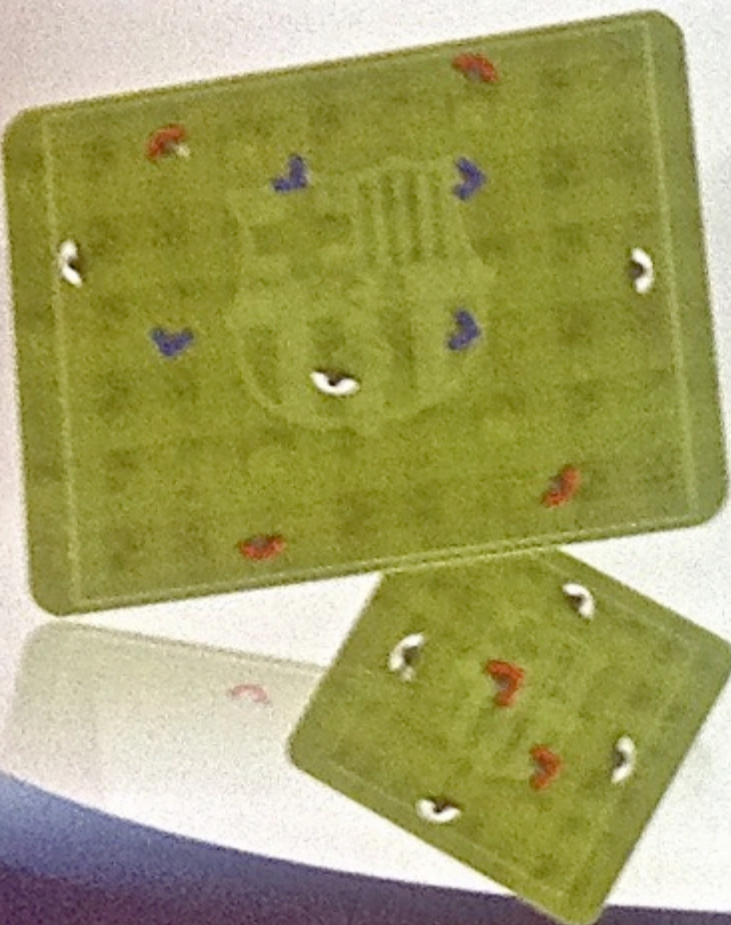
✓ The most significant and characteristic part of our trainings

✓ Speed in combined game

✓ Understanding aspects of game (with and without the ball)

✓ Right distribution of the players in the pitch

✓ Individual and collective aspects



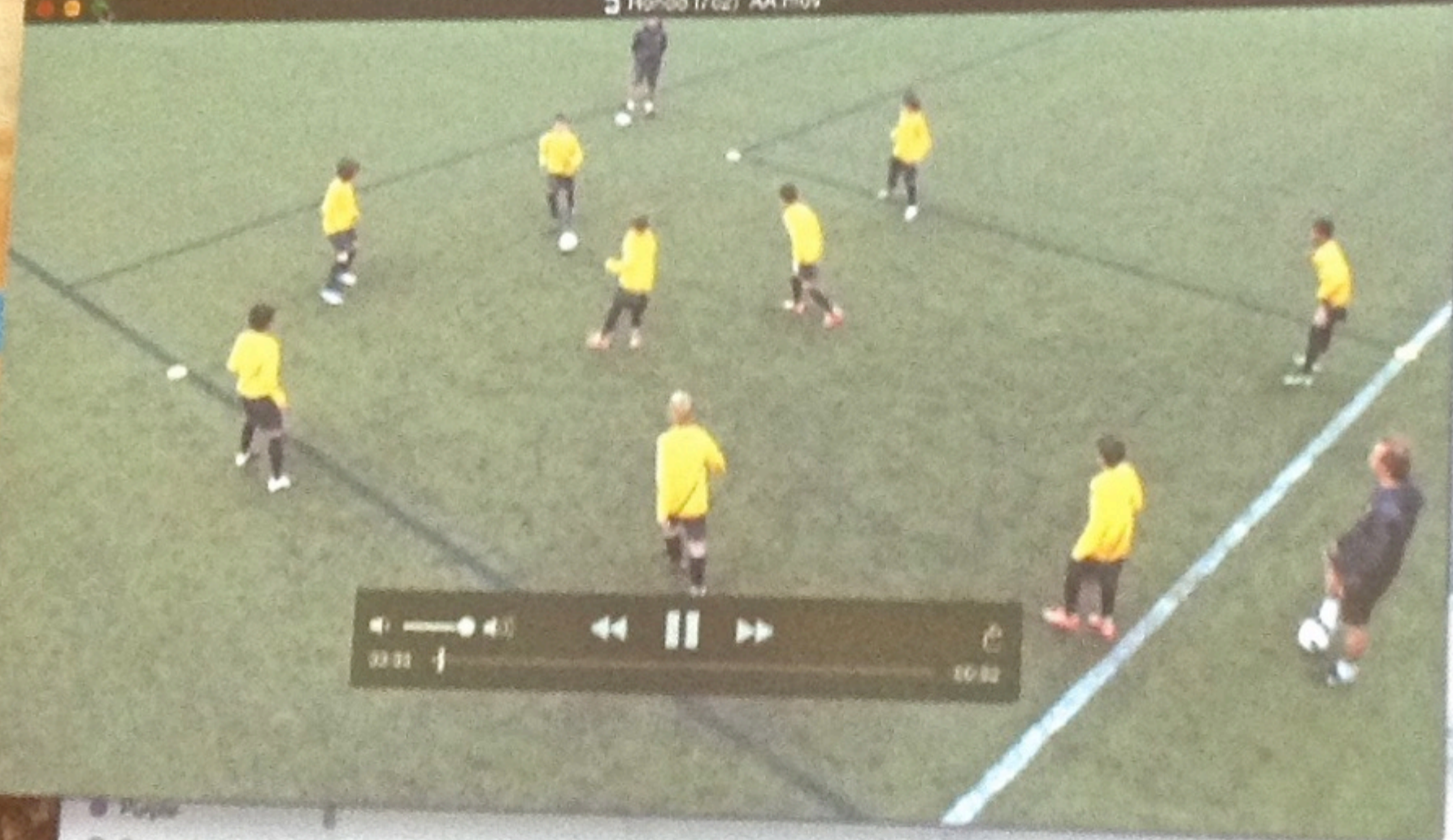


Words of Joan Vila:

Rondo's are the most important to understand the concepts of our playing style

- Rondos are position games
- Video: u12 in a square
- To learn constant mobility, use both legs, position, good decisions
- That is soccer

11:00:17 (02) AA play



03:01 | 10:02

⏪ || ⏩

🔊 🔌 🔍

- Purple
- Gray



FCB _ METHODOLOGY _ Training _ (2) "Rondos" squares / Position games



P.G. (3c3)+3 (U-14)



Rondo 7c2 (U-12)



P.G. (4c4)+3 (U-12)



P.G. (4c4)+3 (U-13)



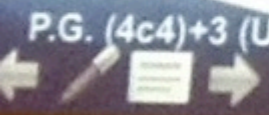
P.G. (8c8)+3 (U-13)



P.G. (7c7)+1 (U-17)



P.G. (4c4)+3 (U-9)











Words of Joan Vila:

Video:

4v4 with 3 jokers-constant mobility

Video:

8v8 with 3 jokers-waiting for the correct moment to make the correct decision

Video:

7v7 with 1 joker- small space -limited touches

- This is what we work on
- Rhythm
- Work on the management of space and time



- ✓ Games with 2 or 3 teams and with spaces of different size
- ✓ Introduce rules to achieve the goal in each match
- ✓ Application of the concepts and coaching point that we have trained throughout the session training
- ✓ **Fidelity at the playing style of FCB**





Words of Joan Vila:

Finally:

the last part of our trainings is the match.

players must gather all the concepts for the game.

- Video: 4v4 with one joker and 2 gk's on two big goals.
- Fast mobility of the ball, find the right moment to execute as a team. Most important is to find the right moment. There is no rush.



✓ Starting at U-15

✓ Always connected with the ball

✓ Tasks and drills oriented to:

- ✓ Strength
- ✓ Endurance
- ✓ Speed

✓ **Always priority in coordinative (TECH) and cognitive (TAC) aspects.**

✓ Some individual gym work (protocols, injury prevention...)





Words of Joan Vila:

Always the priority is technical and tactical

- the physical trainings are started at age 15

FCB _ METHODOLOGY _ Possession Phase _ Concepts



- ✓ Concept of width and depth
- ✓ The goalkeeper is the first attacker
- ✓ With the ball the whole team plays and enjoys
- ✓ Seek combination game by alternating short pass and long ball game.
- ✓ Formation of triangles
- ✓ The ball will always run more than the player





- ✓ Recover the ball immediately
“If the ball is lost, we recover it”
- ✓ The best defense is always not losing the ball
- ✓ And if we lose the ball we keep our position in the pitch
- ✓ Without the ball the whole team... runs
- ✓ It is all a continuous process (with / without the ball)
- ✓ Top concentration and attitude



Words of Joan Vila:

Summary of our:

- Possession phase
- Recovery phase

- We want our players to do what we want to transmit

- Video: shows the first team and the u14 team at the same time-they are different teams, but they have the same playing style



“They told me and I forgot it;

I saw it and I understood it;

I did it and I learned it”

Confucius, 551 AC-478 AC. Chinese philosopher

5. FCB _ THE VALUES THAT HAVE GUIDED OUR WORK



- ✓ **Conviction** in our creative model
- ✓ Attitude of constant **improvement and learning**
- ✓ **Winning mentality** ... but knowing lose
- ✓ **Excellence**: search always better
- ✓ **Perseverance** even in times of difficulty and disappointment
- ✓ Total **confidence** in their possibilities and the whole team
- ✓ Maximum **commitment** to the team and our history
- ✓ Maximum **respect** to the opponent
- ✓ **Concentration**: *"Do not watch the game (match) but to live"*
- ✓ **Pleasure and predisposition** in all training and matches



"So that there is improvement must enjoy playing"



5. FCB _ THE VALUES THAT HAVE GUIDED OUR WORK

✓ PASSION

“ Barça is my passion, my life,
my way of life, on life,
that’s football ”

Xavi Hernández





Words of Joan Vila:

Our values guide us on our model to Enjoy Playing!!

- The most important is to have passion for our playing style
- Xavi is the best example of this

6. FCB CLUB _ OUR PRIDE



**BARÇA
FANS**
OFFICIAL
FCB
COMMUNITY



Messi has won the Golden Ball four consecutive years (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012) and Zond in 2013
• Iniesta (2 times) and Xavi (3 times) -> Golden Ball finalists
Xavi (2008) and Iniesta (2012) -> The best player of UEFA Euro
Iniesta -> UEFA best player in the 2011-12 season



Words of Joan Vila:

- Our pride is:
- Messi, Iniesta, and Xavi being awarded the FIFA individual awards (3 finalists for player of the year)
- They were brought up in our model
- And our pride is having 8 players in 2010 win the World Cup
- They were all trained by the fundamentals of our club

6. FCB CLUB _ OUR PRIDE



2008-2009



win win win

Titles:

- Liga
- Champions League
- Copa del Rey



2009-2010



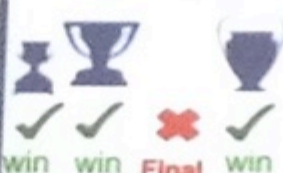
win win win win **Semif.**

Titles:

- Supercopa de España
- Supercopa de Europa
- Mundial de clubs
- Liga



2010-2011



win win **Final** win

Titles:

- Supercopa de España
- Liga
- Champions League



2011-2012



win win win **Semif 2^o** win

Titles:

- Supercopa de España
- Supercopa de Europa
- Mundial de clubs
- Copa del Rey



2012-2013



win win **Semif**

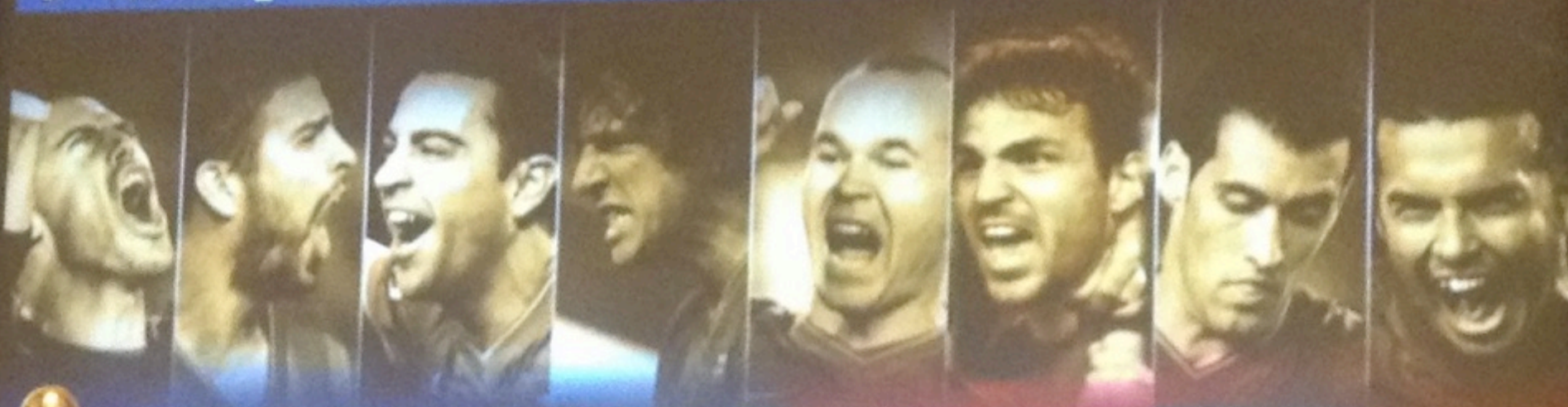
Titles:

- Liga
- Supercopa de España



FCB have won 16 of the 23 official titles disputed in these five seasons

6. FCB CLUB _ OUR PRIDE



BARÇA'S WORLD CUP HEROES

The Spanish Team winning the World Cup in South Africa 2010 was 9 players of the current team of FCB, 8 of them trained in our club

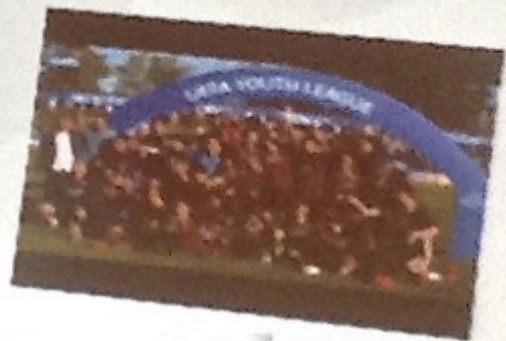


The Spanish Team winning the UEFA Euro (2008 and 2012) was 8 players of the current team of FCB, all trained in our club



6. FCB CLUB _ OUR PRIDE

- ✓ Barça B, 3rd place in the 2nd Division (Liga BBVA) of Spanish football.
- ✓ The average age is 19-20 years.
- ✓ Some of these players have gone to the 1st team (Masip, Sandro, Samper, ...)
- ✓ The Under 19 team, champion of "UEFA YOUTH LEAGUE" and LIGA championship in the 2013-14 season.
- ✓ Some of these players have gone to Barça B and one of them (Munir) to the 1st team.
- ✓ Out of the 15 teams in our grassroots, 14 of them have been champions in the 2013-14 season.
- ✓ Over 90% of players still in our club.





*"A teacher looks towards the eternal,
he can never tell where his influence stops.
For this reason I intend to make good men,
if also I make them strong, better,
and if they also come out wiser, better yet "*

JOAN MARAGALL



“Together we can be wiser than any of us can be alone.

We need to know how to tap this wisdom”

**THE CO-INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTE
(UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA)**



7. FCB _ MORE THAN A CLUB ...

If we get to transmit these concepts, these soccer fundamentals and these **VALUES**, while being an example to our players, ...

- ✓ We will have helped them to become **better, happier and men of good in our society**
- ✓ We will have worked improving the spectacle and formative, recreational, social and competitive objective of this phenomenon called **SOCCER**
- ✓ We can look back with **satisfaction for a job well done**
- ✓ We can be proud to have collaborated with

F.C. BARCELONA "MÉS QUE UN CLUB"



Words of Joan Vila:

Transmitting values:

- Better persons during our formation process through soccer
- We will have the satisfaction for a job well done
- This is why we say we are "More than a club"

- More than understanding our concepts in this presentation-we hope you understand our Model

- We have a soccer team and other sporting teams and all of them follow the same Model



Words of Joan Vila:

Video: from the Barca foundation

- Teaching children values
- Promoting a healthy lifestyle

- More than a club

- Thank You