

GAME FOR LiFE



*Transforming Lives Through Sport
Supplementary Resource*



MR ARDI RAMLI & MR LIONEL TEO



In Support of Coaching Development



ABOUT THE COACHES

MR ARDI RAMLI:

- **STARTED PLAYING FOOTBALL AS AN ADOLESCENT AND REPRESENTED HIS SCHOOLS AT VARIOUS COMPETITIONS**
- **A VOLUNTEER COACH AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS SINGAPORE (FOOTBALL) SINCE 2013**
- **CURRENTLY A PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL**



MR LIONEL TEO:

- **REPRESENTED SINGAPORE AT YOUTH LEVEL INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS FROM 1980-1982**
- **CURRENTLY A POLYTECHNIC SPORTS LECTURER**
- **A VOLUNTEER COACH AT SPECIAL OLYMPICS SINGAPORE (FOOTBALL) SINCE 2016**



KEY LESSONS FROM MR ARDI & MR LIONEL

#1 -

FOCUS ON THE FUNDAMENTALS

#2 -

REMAIN OPEN TO LEARNING, CREATING AND ADAPTING

#3 -

YOU AND ME OUR BLOOD IS RED, WE ARE THE SAME

#4 -

CELEBRATE SMALL WINS



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“Do the basics well. Not just in terms of skills but also conduct, mannerism, courtesy and dressing.” - Lionel Teo

#1 - FOCUS ON THE FUNDAMENTALS

Over years of coaching together, Ardi and Lionel learned to complement one another. This is important as coaching is seldom a one-man show, and every coach will need some form of support. During the Special Olympics training, Lionel usually takes the developmental training where he focuses on their warm-up and basics. Ardi then comes in to take over the drills and tactical plays. Communication between these two coaches is important as they need to know how to follow up from each other’s training programme and ensuring that they are working towards the same set of goals.

According to Lionel, focusing on athletes’ fundamental movements is vital as this will allow them take on tougher drills without much difficulty. By doing this, athletes are reminded that every individual should focus on their basics as this will shape their core as a footballer and as a person. This is the time for coaches to stretch their coaching to include life skills where athletes are also taught to focus on their own conduct, mannerisms, courtesy and dressing.

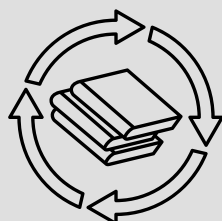
These two coaches also feel that it is important for them to focus on the well-being of the athletes. As these athletes come from diverse backgrounds, sometimes they come with their own worries or problems. Therefore, as coaches, Ardi and Lionel believe that a coach should invest in building connections and rapport with their athletes and to understand what the athletes are going through. Most athletes look up to their coaches and, with that, a coach can influence the athlete positively and share how sports can help them overcome their current situation and how they can triumph. When a coach does this, it gives athletes confidence to believe in themselves too.

“Focus on ability and not disability” - Lionel Teo

#2 - REMAIN OPEN IN LEARNING, CREATING AND ADAPTING

As coaches, having a positive mindset is important. Ardi and Lionel believe that there will be setbacks during their coaching times, but as coaches they have to remember the purpose of why they are here. As volunteer coaches, Ardi and Lionel faced big challenges like attendance and venue availability issues. Sometimes, these caused them to feel like giving up. However, this is where the support of peer coaches comes in. When one of them is having doubts, the other will help to keep them grounded and be reminded of their main purpose of coaching these athletes.

One other challenge that both Ardi and Lionel faced was, they were not initially aware of how to coach athletes with intellectual disabilities. However, with a growth mindset and determination, they learned how to work with this group of athletes by focusing on the fundamental movements and basic concepts. They gradually discovered that athletes with intellectual disabilities require more simplified instructions, clear demonstration, and more repetitions. Sometimes training may be less exciting, but it is required. These methods can also be used or applied to fully-abled athletes depending on their needs. Both have said that as coaches, learning on the job is a constant thing they do, and a coach should never feel too comfortable with the same set of practices. This is because with the diverse needs and abilities of athletes, coaches should find ways to engage their athletes well and look at how to grow them individually.



PRACTICE TIME!

What are some of the challenges you are facing as a coach? Applying a growth mindset to these problems, list a handful of actions you can take to begin the process of discovering solutions.

For example are there some people you can seek advice from, or small experiments you can make, etc?

"Do not let your athletes' challenges or disabilities hinder their progress"
- Ardi Ramli

#3 - YOU AND ME OUR BLOOD IS RED, WE ARE THE SAME

According to Ardi, as a coach, he must not treat his athletes too differently from non-disabled athletes. They do not want to be treated or seen as someone with a disability. With the positive mindset that both coaches have, they learned to believe in the athletes, and this enables the athletes to break barriers and achieve great things in football. With proper guidance and suitable adaptation, these athletes have been able to achieve their own goals and expectations.

In Special Olympics, Unified Sports teams join people with and without intellectual abilities (who are called partners) on the same team to participate in the competitions. The role of a partner is to be a buddy to these athletes. Following the examples of their two coaches, these partners are often seen staying together with the team even after the competitions have ended. This is because a special bond has formed amongst the athletes and partners. With that, most partners are willing to make time to assist and guide these athletes to continue playing football. With their presence, it also creates a higher level of competitiveness for the athletes to play in. This is the beauty of the unified sport in Special Olympics as it shows inclusion and narrows the distinction between athletes with and without intellectual disabilities.

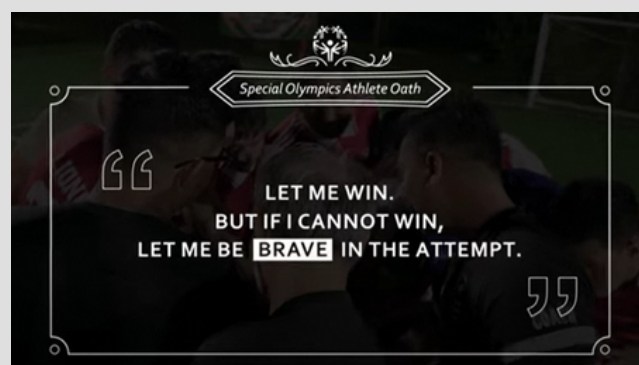


"Relate, connect and bring the best out of your players" - Ardi Ramli

#4 - CELEBRATE SMALL WINS

As the athletes began to train and play in a more competitive setting, they also started having higher expectations of themselves. To avoid the feeling of frustration after losing, the coaches have always reminded the team to focus on their players' oath, *"To be brave in the attempt!"*. This is important as it sets the right context for all the players. The aim is for the team to continue to be brave in taking on new challenges and not focusing on the end results. With this reminder, it keeps the team grounded as they continue to rally each other.

Both coaches focus on celebrating small wins, and this helps build a positive culture in the team. Partners and athletes congratulate each other when small successes are achieved, and they keep striving to do better by setting small goals for themselves. This helps to give athletes a boost in confidence and reminded them that they can play in a competitive setting just like other footballers. Adding on, with the constant encouragement and guidance by the coaches and partners, these athletes have developed a stronger resilience. They are able to face adversity in their lives with confidence from having learnt to celebrate little things that they have achieved.



WELL DONE! 

You have completed this e-learning on SportSG-Ed! We hope you feel more motivated and inspired by all the sharing from Mr Ardi Rami and Mr Lionel Teo.

We would love to see you put what you have reflected into your coaching sessions and practice it.

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