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## 2.2 WHAT IS “GAME-BASED” TEACHING?

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An alternative approach to the traditional technique-centered is to adopt a “game-based”<sup>1</sup> approach to coaching, where the focus is placed on “game centered” activities rather than “technique centered” activities.

The central strategy for using a game-based approach is:

- use activities that teach the “nature” of the game first with the skills of the game added at a pace manageable by the participants;
- questioning players to stimulate their thinking about the “game” or activity – allowing them to discover how and when to execute skills within the context of the game.

An approach of questioning players can be particularly challenging for coaches that are quick to “substitute” their own judgment and simply tell players what was done wrong. Coaches that persist with this style of teaching will be rewarded with players that are better able to “read” the game and reflect upon their own performance.

Some benefits for players when the coach adopts a game-based approach are:

- It promotes maximum participation and “long-term” learning
- Players become skilled in having a broader sense of understanding of the game rather than simply being skilful at the game
- The various ability levels of the players are catered to through activities being varied in complexity at a pace dictated by the players
- Encourages the players’ understanding of the need for rules

<sup>1</sup> Also known as “Game Sense” or “Teaching Games for Understanding”