

A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A CENTRE FOR NOTATIONAL ANALYSIS
AT CARDIFF INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, CYNCOED CENTRE
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WELSH RUGBY UNION

Summary

It is proposed to set up a Centre for Notational Analysis at Cardiff Institute of Higher Education in order to develop a high quality resource base which will contribute to the flourishing of rugby union in Wales.

In a pilot project from September 1991 to May 1992, the Centre would use video technology to:

1. Support the coaching staff of national squads.
2. Monitor the 1991 World Cup.
3. Sample how the game is being played in clubs and schools.
4. Provide information and resource material for the Technical Department.

The Centre will make use of the range of capital equipment available at the Cardiff Institute and under the directorship of Dr Keith Lyons will draw upon a range of expertise.

It is estimated that during the pilot project the cost to the WRU will be £15,000.

Now is the time to use an educational technology approach to the development of the game in Wales. This innovative pilot project should make a significant public and private contribution to the success of the game in the 1990s.

MEMORANDUM

TO : Development Officers
Coaches - National Squads (U21, U19, WSRU & WYRU)
WRU Game Analyst (Dr Keith Lyons)
Assistant Technical Directors

FROM : Technical Director

DATE : 3rd September 1991

SUBJECT : NEW PROVISION OF AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS AND BRIEFING FACILITIES

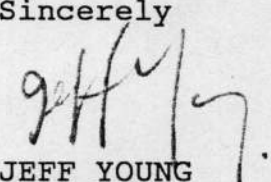
1. The WRU has recently taken possession of new Audio-Visual Equipment comprising:
 - (a) Video Projector
 - (b) Frame By Frame Analytical VHS Recorder (Projects large-screen images from video tapes)
 - (c) Flipcharts
 - (d) Magnetic Board

2. This equipment is in addition to the following equipment which is also in stock at the WRU offices:
 - (a) OHP, Stand and Screen
 - (b) TV Monitor and VHS recorder
 - (c) Video camera and Tapes

3. The video projector has proven to be an extremely useful piece of equipment with the National Squad in reviewing and analysing televised coaching sessions and matches. Addressees are also free to use the equipment. Ideally, the equipment should be used in the WRU Centenary Suite which is being set up as a briefing facility. In exceptional circumstances, equipment may be transported to other locations for use but you will need some training on the use of the video projector.

4. In any event, please contact John Prince for further details.

Sincerely


JEFF YOUNG

Malvern (0684) 562342

Andrew Thomas,
72 Wedderburn Road,
Barnards Green,
Malvern,
Worcestershire.
WR14 2DQ

21st August 1991

Re: VIDEO & STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Dear Jeff,

Thank you for this morning's meeting. I much appreciated your hospitality and the opportunity to talk about video & stats analysis, particularly as you are busy with so many other things.

I thought it best to write down the enclosed requested proposals while things were still fresh in my mind.

I hope they can form the basis for discussion, not least with WRU finance/policy sub-committees!

Meanwhile, I'll look into details of 'capital outlay' items which would speed the video editing and help accuracy with sorting stats.

Looking forward to hearing from you when you have decided where things should go from here.

Best wishes,

Andrew

How I would see the project working with the Wales National XV.
(This is primarily with 5NC matches in mind)

Pre-match requirements:

Unedited TV tape (Not TV highlights)
one camera behind each goal (difficult for away games)
if possible, a longer shot over-view camera
Because of time constraints, not all these would be used for the first batch of videos prepared. Much of their output would be for later tapes screened before the next match or as 'WRU policy case studies'.

After the international:

Turn round the data and videotapes from the two 5NC games that day. There would be Wales's game and another which involves a future foe. Divide each into sections as required (eg. restarts, lineouts, scrums, rucks, mauls, scoring moves, penalties conceded)
This should be done through Saturday night and into Sunday. Using 1 or 2 editing machines and several linked up for copying tapes for individuals

By ensuring (with BBC/ITV) a reliable basic viewers TV feed of the match to Video & Stats for home and away games there is no need for going with the squad to away games. Prepared tapes/VCRs could go for pre-game viewing with coaches to Sc, Eng, Ire, Fr.

Before coaches and players disperse home:

A relevant video tape should be distributed to each player/coach. This would be for home and away games. It will mean meeting the coach/plane or going to the hotel with a box full of tapes. Also a questionnaire to 'prime the pump' for the next squad meeting.

Feedback:

Pressing situations could be dealt with over the phone during the week, but the tape/questionnaire would enable more considered feedback from players when they have settled down from the match.

At the next squad session more detailed stats and videos (using the information from the extra cameras) will have been prepared with the next opponents in mind.

And so it would continue for the 4 matches of the 5NC, and with local adaptations, for tours abroad.

At other times of the year, with less time pressure, Video & Stats would concentrate on other aspects of WRU playing policy as directed by the Technical Director, to support awareness of the basic patterns of play looked for in the WRUs longer term strategy.

Costs:

Working at my present low-key level, running costs would include any necessary travel (by car), postage, cost of video tapes, and, most of all, my TIME, -much of it at unsocial hours under pressure.

What are the pay rates per hour for weekend overtime/night shifts in industry? I am sure a budget could be agreed for these expenses/hours.

Capital outlay:

How much is the WRU prepared to spend? Commercially sponsored editing machines, Super-VHS VCRs (higher quality picture), TV/video cameras, -each would start at £700 with the sky the limit.

To do Video & Stats Analysis properly will involve a serious commitment of time and money. Other nations are loading up. Can we afford to be left behind? Perhaps this is an area where Welsh rugby can regain its once well-deserved reputation for exciting (and profitable) innovation.

Conclusion

I would prefer, at ⁽¹⁹⁹¹⁻⁹²⁾ present, the idea of working ad-hoc paid per match. Also, specialising in sectors identified by you for the longer-term strategy of play from Under 19s → National XV.

Proposals for WRU Video & Statistical Analysis, for Jeff Young 21/8/91

As requested at our meeting this morning, this is a framework for how I think the WRU could best use this rapidly evolving coaching tool.

As American sports organisations have recognised for many years (30 years in the case of NFL football), video/stats analysis cannot be dipped into, taken or left according to a coach's whim.

Nor, if it to be effective, can it be private to one or two coaches. It must be shared, discussed and understood by all players and coaches.

The insecure may think this reduces the coach's power and influence. Far from it. Correct analysis with tasks properly delegated increases the coach's effectiveness, influence and authority.

As more and more sports coaches recognise this, and appreciate its worth, those who do not get 'on board' risk sharing the fate of those tribes who stuck by their bows and arrows when guns/cannons were being developed.

However, merely collecting Video & Stats data will not turn losers into winners. It only claims to provide:-

- a). Objective evidence,
- b). Indications of weakness,
- c). Opportunity for feedback, reinforcement, and motivation.

Video & Stats Analysis is most effective when part of an integrated framework of preparation and feedback. This should link 3 main areas;-

1. Player conditioning:

This allows squad sessions to concentrate on team cohesion and collective, unit, and individual skills.

2. Techniques:

This allows players to learn more quickly and helps team cohesion by making them feel involved and valued.

3. Tactics:

Using video & stats allows coaches and players to evaluate 'us' and 'opponents' on a team and player basis.

No.2. and No.3. are the areas I would like to be involved. No.1. should be delegated entirely to the specialists in that area.

I do not think the coach/manager should involve himself in physical training or conditioning (and this is an ex-Loughborough Colleges post-grad talking) in any way, except when asking his conditioning coach whether 'X' or 'Y' is peaking or fit to play. He has too much else to do and too little time.

Video and Statistical analysis should provide coaches and players with short, sharp, specific video tapes and tables/diagrams of data for:-

1. the team (both Wales, and our opponents; past and future)
2. individual players (" , " ; " ")
3. referees (past and future)

The contents would be a positive objective record which would encourage mental rehearsal.

Players must be encouraged to comment on the video & stats provided (on an individual or unit basis) before and after each game.

Having rambled on about its purpose, now we can look at logistics!